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NORTHWEST CONQUEST

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by

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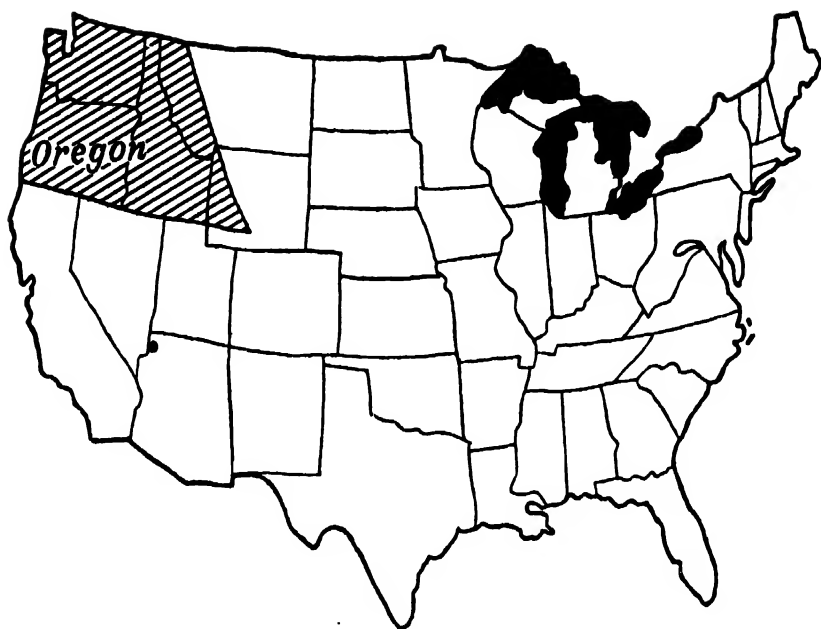
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PREFACE

Mountains, colossal rivers, great steppes, drainage basins that were immense prairies, valleys, arid deserts: all concluded on an awesome scale of grandeur, huge and hushed and in startling contrast to the astringency of the American eastern seaboard, created by the tremendous sweep of the Master Painter's brush . . . Oregon!

Out of its anarchy would arise greatness. From its earliest fogs would come vision, but before these things within its territory, within the scarlet band of Oregon's past, there was struggle, suffering, decades of blood—of Northwest Conquest. . . .

LAURAN PAINE.

For

HARRY F. NAUGHTON

University of Oregon

To whom I am indebted for a particular favour

CHAPTER ONE

Oregon—Northwest Territory

THE American purchase of Louisiana for the eventual grand total sum of \$27,267,622, initiated in 1803, was made because of prevalent American fear that the Mississippi River, over which was conveyed roughly three-fifths of all American commerce, would be closed at its mouth—New Orleans—by, first, the Spanish, and, later, the French.

What was actually accomplished by the purchase exceeded the wildest dreams of those seeking to control a single waterway. Three conditions loomed simultaneously of such sweeping magnitude that the United States was over a hundred years recovering from them.

First, the purchase literally hurled national boundaries beyond the middle-western half of the North American continent, as yet vaguely understood and sketchily explored, into a totally unknown Far West. Secondly, the purchase put an immense ammunition dump at the disposal of the American Army from which the Mexican War could eventually be launched. Thirdly, it presented the United States with bases south and west of the midwestern Indian country from which attacks and expeditions could invade Indiandom with sufficient tactical superiority eventually to subjugate the hostile neolithics.

It can be said of the Louisiana Purchase that it gave a young nation sufficient size to appear dignified on maps ; offered incalculable resources, land masses, and means for expansion which armies would have required generations to win. It gave a small eagle space to scream in; it so enlarged American

perspective that generations later men were still unable to grasp that isolation for continental America became a myth as early as 1803.

After the Purchase, Americans were in the Far West through adjacency whether they liked it or not. They were obliged—if not to see, at least to hear—of a place called Oregon, which was to become the most unique acquisition the United States ever gained: something for nothing.

When Texas was annexed in 1845, American appearance in the Southwest was assured. Later, Mexico was given \$25,000,000 for additional provinces—"conscience money"—among which was California. California adjoined Oregon on the north.

Oregon was, inadvertently, a cause for hostilities between the United States and Mexico: not a major cause but still a cause, one of the facets which brought about the Mexican War in 1846.

Prior to 1846, Mexico was annoyed by Texican upstarts who proclaimed their Mexican province of Texas an independent "nation". Mexico sent armies to crush the rebels who, for the most part, were transplanted Americans. In the bloody days that followed, Mexican-American cordiality faded, but, despite Mexican Generalissimo Santa Anna's defiance and sabre-rattling, Mexico did not particularly wish to become embroiled in a war with the United States—at least, not until her chances of victory were somewhat better than they were in 1846.

So, when friction developed later between the British and Americans over ownership of Oregon Territory, and James K. Polk, taciturn, grim, dogged, was elected President of the United States with the war-cry of "fifty-four forty or fight!" as his banner, Mexico felt the time was auspicious for accepting the gauntlet that Americans had been flinging at her feet for some years. Mexico went to war confident that England would be her ally and the Americans be fatally weakened by having to fight in Texas and Oregon, places thousands of miles apart.

But just as Oregon's disputed ownership encouraged the Mexicans so did the sudden resolving of British-American

differences leave Mexico facing the full might of a nation she had been certain would not be able to present a solid front.

Mexico lost the war, her territories, a considerable portion of her provincial population, and would have lost her national sovereignty as well had some of the more drum-thumping Americans had their way. Inadvertently, then, the Oregon question abetted both the declaration of war and the ultimate defeat of the Mexicans.

American ownership of California fostered emigration from the States. Gold eventually brought that emigration to a flood-tide, and California lay just below Oregon, while eastward lay a vast mass of the Louisiana Purchase. By reason of juxtaposition, progressive Americans became ardent over the prospect of owning the Oregon country.

However, by the time Americans over on the Atlantic seaboard began to accept the possibility of a United States which extended from the Atlantic to the Pacific—and 1,360 miles farther up the Pacific coast above California—several things had happened, including the War of 1812, and establishment of British trading posts throughout the disputed territory in so far as it was explored up to that time.

Then the War of 1812 culminated and, in the peace talks between British and American statesmen, the differences over Oregon were discussed. But little beyond talking could be done because of mutual ignorance concerning the area in question. Both nations knew Oregon was there; the British better than the Americans. To the latter, Oregon was many things, but not all Americans were in agreement that it was worth fighting over. The majority of Americans imagined it as an Indian-infested desert of some kind. In so far as the maxim "fifty-four forty or fight" was concerned, it was not basically Oregon or the disputed boundary between American and British possessions which aroused the American mind, but the never-quite-required antagonism toward England; twice foe, twice invader.

This was borne out later by the confused and suspicious way the United States went about solidifying her position and also by the way she made her muddling conquest. Still,

Oregon Territory was the only adjunct ever appropriated by the Americans for which they did not have to pay a cent. Therefore, when they appeared in the far reaches more suspicious of England than bent on taking and holding a country, good fortune far more than good sense made the acquisition possible.

It has been repeatedly stated that Americans were the first to explore the Oregon country—which, throughout this narrative means the Oregon Territory, including what are now the States of Oregon, Washington, Idaho, the westernmost portion of Montana, and a sizeable slice of western Wyoming. It is possible Americans were the first but no proof exists that this was so. Russia was far closer to Oregon than were the seaboard States of the mid-nineteenth century. The British appear to have had strong footholds in Oregon, or just north of there, in earliest times, and the ubiquitous French-Canadian *voyageur* most certainly left strong traces of his early passage, not only in names of rivers, lakes, mountains, but among the native population as well. As late as 1870, Oregon remained largely a mystery to the Americans who owned it, and whoever were the first white people to enter the country, it can safely be doubted that they were Americans.

In one sense, however, the earliest explorers and those who came later had one contact in common: Indians. Northwestern natives were generally of several linguistic stocks and totally independent of one another in most things.

For the most part the tribes were small, some numbering not more than a few hundred souls, but the more prominent groups could be counted in thousands. Outstanding among these people were the Nez Percés, so-called by early day *voyageurs* after a supposed custom of piercing their noses for ornaments.

The Nez Percés, definitely of a higher order of intelligence than most Northwestern Indians, were among the first Indians to obtain horses. These came into the Northwest *via* the Shoshonis, Shastas, Klamaths, and others who stole them from the Spaniards as early as 1750.

The Cayuse Indians, always restless and troublesome, became prominent horse-Indians. Their tribal name was associated with the tough little horses they rode and it remains to this day a colloquialism for a certain type of small, wiry, hardy horse. The Cayuses were never a numerous tribe and when opposing numerically superior Indians in wars or raids usually managed to secure allies among the Yakimas, a fairly powerful tribe, the Klickitats, another small band, or some of the countless other small tribes with whom they were friendly.

Prior to the coming of the horse, Northwestern Indians were sedentary. There was no reason for them to be active, for their country teemed with wildlife. Once mounted, however, they ranged as far inland as the Comanche country and frequently banded together for hunts into Blackfeet, Crow, and Sioux territories. In the wars which resulted from this general trespassing, Northwestern Indians learned a higher mode of warrior conduct than they had known before. They borrowed freely from their enemies in the matter of general attire and were well on the road to becoming proud, fierce, Plains Indians when the influx of whites disrupted their racial progress forever, exactly as happened with their enemies; in fact as happened with all North American Indians.

The list of Northwestern Indian tribes is staggering but one must remember that the majority of these tribes were small. When banded together they could mount a thousand warriors but separately most of them had difficulty putting two hundred warriors into the field. Uniquely, however, while they preyed upon one another somewhat, they were not enemies in the sense that the more easterly and southerly Plains Indians were. An example was furnished when the whites threatened to overrun their domains and the Northwestern Indians came together in order to make common cause against the invaders. This was not the case with the Crows and Sioux, Blackfeet and Comanches, who went down to defeat independently, hating one another with all the savagery of aborigines, never making any attempt to overlook old animosities in order to present a common front to their vanquishers.

Not all the Northwestern tribes are listed here. A few were only involved, in passing, in the struggle for supremacy in the Northwest. Indians involved to a more or less active degree of hostility were of the following tribes: Walla Walla, Nisquali, Cowlitz, Couer D'Alene, Tunahé, Flathead (whose heads were neither flat nor flattened), Umatilla, Klickitat, Umpqua, Cayuse, Nez Percé, Klamath, Modoc, Takelman, Coos, Tutuni, Kalapooia, Tillamook, Kwalhioqua, Twana, Wasco, Chinook (commonly used in a derogatory sense to lump all unwashed Indians, like "Siwash", although the Siwash were an actual tribe), Wenatchec, Columbia (bands found along the Columbia River which may have been any tribe "gone fishing"), Spokane, Kalispell, Pend D'Orielle, Rogue River and Bannock.

Within the Northwestern sphere of influence were the Shoshoni (called "Snakes" in early days), Goshute, Paviosto, Piute, and occasional bands of hunters, raiders and explorers from tribes such as Apache, Comanche, Ute, and Kiowa-Apache, Crow, Sioux, Mandan, and even Blackfeet.

The Piutes, some Shoshonis, and an occasional Ute, after the advent of Mormons into Utah Territory, fell under the influence of the Saints. Through these Indians a garbled version of Mormon teaching reached Oregon Territory. This was followed later by Mormon emissaries out proselytizing in the fertile field and, as we shall notice later, the Mormons spoke a language Indians understood: the gift of guns, powder and shot.

Northwestern Indians showed up at the Green River rendezvous to barter, buy, sell, and loot when they dared, while in their own country they established two successful trading areas which drew easterly and southerly tribesmen to them. One was at The Dalles, where an insignificant band of Wishram Indians became wealthy by drying and baling fish for trade to the inland people without leaving their own country. The other rendezvous was an immense mountain plateau, named Grande Ronde by earliest *voyageurs* and mountain men. Here the eastern and southern trails met and mingled; here, too, Northwestern Indians such as Walla Wallas and Nez Percés, conducted a thriving business in stolen horses.

The complexity of Indian tribal designations in the Northwest was little different from other places in the far west. Because of an inability among early explorers to appreciate tribal differences, names were confused, tribes lumped under ill-fitting colloquialisms such as Chinook and Siwash, and a Cayuse could be a Yakima for all the old trappers and adventurers knew—or cared. Out of this has come an everlasting confusion for the historian going over old records and journals. Moreover, since the mounted Northwestern Indians might be found anywhere foraging or pillaging, when an explorer said he found “some Chinooks” in eastern Montana they may have been Crows, Assiniboin, Lakota or Dakota Sioux, or for that matter Tonkawas up out of Texas on a raid. And since “Chinook” came to mean not necessarily a band of distinct Indians, but was a derisive term used to designate any Northwestern Indian of low order, only the Lord and the mountain man knew what he saw. One thing only was certain; a Chinook was an Indian.

Later, when the Northwestern Indian wars were under way, the army, through its officers, scouts, surveyors, *et cetera*, used the same yardstick of ignorance. What was thought to be a Yakima by Colonel Wright was called a Pend D’Orielle by Father Joset, S. J.

Differentiation was rendered still more difficult when the matter of languages came up. Northwestern Indians had several distinct languages and endless varieties of dialects, but, unlike the more numerous eastern Plains Indians, Northwestern tongues were practically impossible for white men to understand, let alone speak. There were words formed by exploding breath through the nose. There were tongue-twisters with clicks and clacks suicidally unpronounceable, not to mention words spat through clenched teeth while performing diphthong gymnastics with the dangling pallet. None of these fitted the white man’s gullet or ideas of what a language ought to be. As a result, a jargon called “Chinook” came into being. Because Northwestern Indians loved to talk—something they had no monopoly on—they adopted Chinook readily. It became

a *lingua franca* not only between Indians and whites but between and among other Indians. In time this bewildering mixture of Nootka, English, French, and what-not, was used almost exclusively. Many an Indian dialect passed away entirely and in time whole languages fell into disuse.

Northwestern Indians also had a sign-language, but this was not as highly developed as the *wibluta* of eastern Plains Indians. It lacked the eloquence, the imaginative skill used elsewhere and, generally, was employed to indicate thoughts and articles commonly understood, not involved ideals or abstractions.

"Chinook" with constant additions, grew from an approximate two hundred and fifty garbled words in 1841 to over fourteen hundred words by 1894, many of which are still in use. Pish was fish, cly was cry, piaah was fire, and so on. When spoken slowly it was difficult to understand but not impossible. When spoken fast it was like an avalanche—sound without meaning.

The characteristics of the Northwestern landmass where these savages lived were anomalous with other far western areas. Mountains, colossal rivers, great steppes, drainage basins that were immense prairies, valleys, arid deserts; all created by the tremendous sweep of the Master Painter's brush, all concluded on an awesome scale of grandeur, huge and hushed, were in startling contrast to the astringency of the American eastern seaboard. This so-called "Inland Empire" continued to awe newcomers for two hundred years.

It lay between the Rocky Mountains and the Cascades, was formed by, and was the drainage area for, the mighty Columbia River which found only one pass through the towering Cascades to facilitate its march to the sea. The Columbia was six miles wide at its mouth. In 1775 the Spaniards thought it a passage to another sea. In 1788, an English naval officer on half-pay, sailing under the Portuguese flag, thought the Spaniards were wrong, and afterwards the British claimed the Columbia's discovery.

But these were not the first wayfarers in this last outpost,

for, according to old Indian tales, several shipwrecks occurred in the early seventeen-hundreds and one party of twenty or thirty seamen was killed by natives over their attention to Indian women, never an unusual occurrence in the far west.

In 1750, Indians stumbled upon two heavily bearded men popping corn on what became Clatsop Beach. Greatly intrigued by the whites, who were taken prisoner, the Indians came to rely upon them in many ways. One, apparently, was a vocational blacksmith for he made the Indians knives and metal implements from iron and steel salvaged from a wrecked ship in the shallows. These men were eventually given their freedom. In 1811, an old man living near the Cascades claimed to be the son of one of these white men—who were, more than likely, Spaniards.

Indian tales of early-day white men include one concerning a red-haired sailor washed ashore from a wreck about 1760. A Nehalem maiden was intrigued by the castaway, nursed him to health and later married him. He secured guns, ball and powder from his wrecked ship and in the course of a disagreement with an Indian over the girl, shot and killed his rival.

In 1806 Lewis and Clark were startled to meet an Indian warrior whose freckles and reddish hair were unaccounted for. The Astorians were likewise somewhat surprised when an Indian who visited them had the name "Jack Ramsey" tattooed on his arm.

About 1833, a Japanese boat went aground near Cape Flattery. However, by that year the British were established at Hudson's Bay and the Orientals were returned to Japan *via* England before they could spread their charm around as Ramsey and the Spaniards had done.

But long before this, in 1517 in fact, the Spaniard, Balboa, built ships on the Pacific Coast. Nothing is left to indicate that he sailed northward but it is not impossible. Hernan' Cortez sent Ulloa up the California coast seeking a waterway through the continent to another sea, in 1539.

The probing for a way through the continent or around it

went on and quite probably some of those courageous adventurers ran foul of the shoals, squalls and monotonous fogs, that ran the length of the Oregon coastline. The Spaniard, Ferrelo, cruised up the Oregon coast, we know, a long time before the Americans—and probably the British—were interested in Oregon. Spain's commerce between South American territories such as Mexico, and her rich pearl, the Philippine Islands, was parallel to the Oregon coastline. In 1577, colourful Sir Francis Drake also bespoke the Oregon landfall.

In 1728 the Dane, Vitus Bering, in Russian employ, sailed around the eastern end of Asia and discovered Alaska. After that the tempo of discovery increased. Spaniards, Englishmen, Russians, Americans, even a Greek euphionously named Juan de Fuca, sailed, tacked, and lumbered their ways in and around Oregon waters. In each instance the purpose was a mythical and reputed Northwest Passage. It was not colonization. The coastline was forbidding, darkly shadowed by impenetrable forests, cloaked in dense fogs, uninviting.

In 1786, an English sea captain, Charles Barkley, took his wife with him. She unquestionably was the first white woman to see Oregon and the Northwest country.

Captain James Cook's third voyage up the Northwest coast in 1776 proved that searching for the mythical Northwest Passage was not altogether a waste of time and money, for furs obtained in barter from the Indians were subsequently sold in China for astonishing prices. This put an altogether different outlook on the view of the Oregon country, held by most nations and all mariners of the time.

An American, John Ledyard, returned from Cook's voyage, wrote a book of his travels and tried mightily to get Americans interested in Oregon—as remote to them, then, as the moon. He failed to do more than spark the thinking of a few rare visionaries who, in 1787, four years after Ledyard's return, sent two ships under Richard Gray to the far northwest.

Gray found the English already there; however, there was no friction and after a little trading Gray sailed for China and

eventually returned home, being the first to carry the American flag around the world.

Naturally, the brisk interest in furs, displayed by the bearded white men, aroused the Indians and gave a considerable "shot in the arm" to their fish-and-game economy. Naturally, too, when the natives saw the comparative ease with which the whites brought down game with muskets they desired to own such "thunder-sticks". It wasn't long before the white traders and Indians found a common ground upon which to do business: guns were brought to Oregon in wholesale lots. They were not good guns but they would shoot, vomit great gusts of smoke and make a frightful noise, things which completely fascinated Indians.

On their own part, the white men encouraged Indians to secure more pelts and while these were not marketable by latter-day standards, in those distant early days, with the demand what it was, they were not only acceptable but eagerly sought after.

Gradually the novelty of white men amongst them wore off and when a few of the rough adventurers from many lands began to abuse the Indians, appropriate their girls and women, walk roughshod over their beliefs, totems and neolithic privileges, the Indians became disillusioned, antagonistic. Captain Gray discovered this growing antipathy in 1791, when his second mate and two crew members, fishing near Revillagigedo, were attacked and killed. Wary, but disinclined to believe that the antagonism extended beyond local boundaries, Gray drifted southward to Clayoquot Sound, out of the hostile country. He presumed himself safe at Clayoquot.

Upon a narrow spit of land Gray built a blockhouse, had his ship's guns taken there and set up, for he intended to winter ashore and use the time to refit and overhaul his ship, the *Columbia*, and to build another vessel, the *Adventurer*.

The Indians of Clayoquot Sound appeared friendly and Gray went among them freely, treated their sick, paid many social calls to their village and returned Indian courtesies at his blockhouse. There was nothing to excite his suspicions at all,

but, during this time, the Indians had been gathering up about two thousand warriors among whom were two hundred trade-guns with ample powder and shot.

What induced the Indians to permit the white men to come and go at will was a natural indisposition to attack unless they were confident of victory and small losses to themselves. They knew Gray and his sailors were rough men. This overwhelming caution, however, is what betrayed them.

Captain Gray had a young Sandwich Islander in his crew and the Indians, convinced that this dusky youth was some kind of an Indian slave, went to him with the proposition that he throw water over the guns and powder of the white men in return for which they would make him a chief. In due course Gray was notified of the plot and took steps to prevent it. Afterward, alarmed at Gray's militant bearing, the Indians fled. Gray destroyed their village.

In the spring of 1792, Gray met two British ships under Captain George Vancouver and Lieutenant William Broughton. After a comparison of experiences, ideas of the country and its inhabitants, probable terrain and navigable rivers, the ships went their separate ways.

Exploration continued by sea and the burgeoning fur trade boomed on land, for the demand grew as the quality of the furs became known. Europe usurped a goodly portion of the Oriental business and even Americans, aping French and British fashions, began to demand this seemingly inexhaustible and superior product of the far Northwest.

As a result commerce came labouring overland, as well as by sea, and the touted Northwest Passage dimmed in comparison to the value of what actually was known to exist in the Oregon country: furs.

As early as 1698, the Hudson's Bay Company had obtained a firm foothold and sent an employee, Henry Kelsey, to explore the country west of Hudson's Bay. Kelsey's report confirmed trapper rumours and not for eighty-four years did another white man bother to follow his tracks, officially. There was no need: business grew and prospered without additional explora-

tion. Kelsey had reported the western country unbelievably rich.

An urge to see what was on the other side of the mountain drove many restless men into the lost continent, unofficially. The La Verendrye brothers, in 1742-43, went at least as far inland and southward as present-day Helene, Montana: Lewis and Clark trekked through in 1804-06: the Astorians, in 1812-13, went all the way to the mouth of the Columbia. Jedediah S. Smith, one of the best of them all, came in 1827-28, Wyeth in 1832-33, and hurrying John Charles Fremont in 1843-44.

There were others, also, but like most early-day fur trappers, *voyageurs*, pathfinders and adventurers, they left no records behind. They left freckled kids and tattooed sons and bleaching bones, but no journals: only physical evidence, mute but eloquent, of their passing.

Doughty Alexander MacKenzie, wintering in the blinding white world of frozen waste above Oregon, found some Indians who had iron implements. Who made them? How did they get so far north?

While intrepid frontiersmen of half a dozen nationalities poked and pried; paddled fragile birchbark canoes; ate raw moose gut and broiled horse; survived rapids, freezings, limitless silent forests, clouds of hostile arrows fired from hundreds of different ambushes, and trapped or just explored, back on the eastern seaboard Thomas Jefferson told his countrymen they had better start thinking of ways to forestall British domination above California. This was as far back as 1782, when, within the memory of all, the Revolutionary War was still vivid and the surest way to arouse an American was to intimate that Britain was conniving at re-establishment on the continent.

Later, Jefferson, as President, more fearful than ever of a British foothold on the West Coast, talked the Continental Congress out of \$25,000 and appointed Captain Meriwether Lewis of Virginia to lead an expedition overland to give strength to Gray's earlier sea explorations, thus doubly binding the

United States' claim to the farthest frontier. Lewis wangled as his second-in-command William Clark, brother of James Rogers Clark, who was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the American Army for the particular undertaking.

During the inclement winter of 1803, Lewis and Clark assembled their expedition; in early May, 1804, they started up the Missouri River and by October, 1804, were in Mandan Indian country where they built Fort Mandan and wintered. The expedition did not exceed thirty white men but each man had been hand-picked. Mostly they were Kentuckians whose ability to "bark" a squirrel at the maximum shooting distance for the long-rifle, as well as their traditional hardihood, made them worth five times as many ordinary soldiers.

In the course of the expeditions peregrinations through the far west they acquired Toussaint Charbonneau, French-Canadian *voyageur*, possessor of innumerable Indian wives, who was living with the Hidatsas. Toussaint took along his favourite wife, Sacajawea. She later became invaluable as the best of the expeditions' guides. One of her outstanding services was performed when dry-land sailor Charbonneau upset a bull boat and the expeditions' journals went into the water. Sacajawea scooped up the books as they went swirling past, a feat for which Lewis and Clark were greatly indebted to her, although old records indicate her action was prompted more by the economy of the eternal female spirit—never throw anything away—than because she was cognizant of the value of the things she saved.

When the expedition finally found some Shoshoni Indians their reception was anything but cordial. The Shoshonis, Lewis and Clark felt, could guide them to the Columbia basin, the Oregon country, but the Shoshonis had never seen a white man before and were electrified by the abrupt appearance of these shaggy strangers. It took considerable tact to effect a council with the natives but once it was done the Shoshonis reacted as enthusiastically toward their new friends as they had reacted perversely hours before. In the course of much eating and speechifying the Indians lavished upon the reluctant white men

the contents of their personal paint pots. Captain Clark's negro slave, York, taxed Shoshoni ingenuity. He was black as the ace of spades and very few colours showed up on him advantageously. The Indians then made tentative attempts to rub York's pigmentation off and when it was found that he was *black*, not painted black, their fascination increased proportionately to poor York's discomfort.

The Lewis and Clark *Journals* can be referred to for all that happened to the expedition. Suffice it here to say that, it eventually achieved the purpose for which it had come west and, while it all sounds so trite now, a glance at the country those men toiled through and over, will dispel any illusions. They negotiated Lemhi Pass, the Bitter Roots, Salmon River country, to name a few of the places, and the Lolo Trail which would prove to the nation just how hazardous it was when the Nez Percés finally took up the hatchet generations later. The Dalles, destined to play a stellar role in the Northwest Conquest, Walla Walla River and Indians of the same name, Umatilla Rapids: every one a place of peril, suffering and hardship.

The expedition made unique, as well as monumental, discoveries. One was that the camas bread secured from Indians, when repeatedly soaked during the canoe travels, made potent and passable beer. Another was that fleas were ignored by Indians but the Northwestern varieties had affinities for white flesh and numbered into the billions. The expedition went naked a good part of the time in order to facilitate apprehension of these parasitic guests. Sacajawea's reaction to this spectacle has not been left us.

The natives ability to pick up anything a white man laid down "before the handle was cool" taught the explorers to watch Indians with both eyes. Imagine their astonishment when they met some "Chinooks" and found in their possession a gun, among other metal objects. Still farther, the expedition portaged around the Cascades and just missed meeting the brig *Lydia* out of Boston which had sailed ten miles up the Columbia.

Lewis and Clark met the Yakimas, were entertained royally

by them and, later on, also met some Couer D'Alenes. All in all, they accomplished more than President Jefferson could reasonably have hoped for. They did it despite incredible hardships: the Rockies, the dark canyons and twisted, tortured lengths of untamed rivers. America should be proud of them. They carried Jefferson's ideal to a resounding conclusion. They established the fact that America had a claim on the Oregon country by reason of overland exploration as well as by the sea route, and proximity, but Lewis and Clark were nearly half a century late in so far as the French were concerned.⁴

Voyageurs or *coureurs des bois*, trapped and explored as far west as the Saskatchewan long before there were any United States. The Hudson's Bay Company, chartered in 1670, also established British claims to the Oregon country, preceding America by quite some time, but the matter of adjacency was a formidable advantage in the three-cornered scramble for ownership from which, with the fall of Montreal in 1760, the French were eliminated, the field being left henceforth to contending Britain and United States. But French-Canadians were there, if not first, then at least among the first. They remained to the last, too; their names are still heard, faintly musical, reminiscent of what once was, in the Northwest.

The Hudson's Bay Company exerted great influence throughout the Inland Empire. It established regulations which lent the fur trade a semblance of the dignity of civilized commerce but, more than anything else, the Company maintained the extremely precarious balance between overlordship and equality which has ever been the medium through which whites managed to live at peace with, and control, Indians.

The Company fixed fur prices to be paid to the Indians. It did not allow the sale of liquor to Indians and, at the outset, the sale of guns was also proscribed. Fur trading was limited to specific villages and rendezvous. Company men, equivalent to policemen, were stationed at trading towns and gathering places. Things did not always work out as intended, naturally, but the Company's fixed policy of fairness to Indians "paid off" again and again. With only a few resolute employees, the

Hudson's Bay Company was able to surmount the frequent and bloody clashes which occurred after the free traders came. Throughout those hectic, bloody years the Company steered an increasingly difficult course through all manner of challenges, never faltering and rarely wrong. As much cannot be said for the lusty Americans who came west; personifications of individual liberty; lawless; as wild and as deadly as any Indian, and occasionally a little smarter.

Not so much in defiance of the stringent Hudson's Bay Company's inflexible rules, but simply because they were totally independent, anti-British, and free trappers in the most exalted and unfettered meaning of the term, American mountain men scorned the Company's edicts. They caused the natives to get roaring drunk, robbed them, gambled with them, stole thousands upon thousands of furs from them. It was difficult for the Company to apprehend these men. Punishment was in itself a delicate problem, not only because ownership of the Northwest was still moot but, also, because the mountain men had influence over some of the Indians and no one knew exactly how many warriors might rally against the company if incited to do so by Americans.

In time the free trappers formed their own companies. One, called the North West Company and composed of trappers who owned shares, was founded in 1783. Organizational details were excellent. Trade goods were bought in England, shipped to Montreal and hauled overland into the Northwest. Eventually, clashes of personality resulted in the resignation of rugged Alexander MacKenzie who then formed his own firm and called it the New North West Company, and the fur trade war was on.

In 1803, between the two share-companies, a stunning twenty-two thousand gallons of whisky was used in the fight to monopolize the Indian fur trade. Meanwhile, the Hudson's Bay Company stuck to its no-whisky rule and stayed in business notwithstanding and, also during this time, Indians were treated to a splendid example of the white man's instability. Naturally, as the trade war progressed the Indians became more and more

demoralized. Both the North West Company and the New North West Company fought hard and unscrupulously to win over native trappers. The means employed were not only whisky, but guns, powder and shot, knives, tomahawks, not to mention sanguinary encouragement by each side for the Indians actively to participate in the elimination, by fair means or foul, of the opposition.

When Simon McTavish, head of the old North West Company and bitter foe of Alexander MacKenzie, died, the white men amalgamated both companies and MacKenzie emerged as outstanding shareholder. Thus did the trade war end so far as the whites were concerned. However, Indians couldn't and wouldn't bury the hatchet so easily. They had been conditioned to deceive, something not altogether foreign to their natures anyway, to steal and ambush, to lie and oppose those who came among them to trade. They continued to do so and the first seeds of antagonism against whites, sown during the trade war, were to bear perennial fruit for generations, until the forests and plateaux were figuratively drenched with blood, Indian and white.

In the embers of that trade war may be found the basic cause for friction which lasted until shortly before the twentieth century. The factors which kept it alive were several but, primarily, it was the free-wheeling independence of the mountain men. Their total disregard and complete lack of any regulations kept the Indians stirred up, and, as the number of whites increased, so also did turmoil in the Northwest. What had been an Indian world of loose alliances and more or less static existence for eons, now became an empire of anarchy with an economy founded upon furs and firewater. The Northwest was forever changed.

David Thompson, English-born, apprenticed to the Hudson's Bay Company for seven years, arrived at Fort Churchill in 1784, aged fifteen years. For the next thirteen years Thompson walked, rode, and canoed through something like fifty thousand miles. With a little brass sextant and a large cartographical blank space which was northwestern America, he started out

to chart, map, and log, half a continent. In the course of his incredible travels he wintered with Indians, suffered from intense cold, took observations with his instrument constantly and was so phenomenally accurate that to this day much that he plotted and observed is used almost totally without change. Two years prior to the turn of the present century the Geological Survey of Canada said Thompson's figures "left little or nothing to be desired".

Again a clash of personalities, this time involving the Hudson's Bay Company's Resident Chief at York Factory, Joseph Colen, resulted in some acid correspondence between Colen's outpost and Company headquarters in London. Colen wanted traders, not geographers. He wanted furs not maps. David Thompson's first love was exploration. He was a fair trader but not a dependable one so, in 1797, he quit the Company and went over to the North Westerners. In his new capacity of explorer he sought the 49th parallel of latitude, visited some Mandan villages and traded where and when he could, while surveying. His accumulated knowledge was such that by 1799 he was put in charge of a trading-exploring party which crossed the Rockies. In the same year he married Charlotte Small, daughter of a North West stockholder and a Chippewa woman. In 1807, David, his wife and children, went over into the Columbia River country *via* a pass which ironically was named for Joseph Howse who had been sent by the Hudson's Bay Company to see what Thompson was up to.

Howse did not like the new country his spying took him into, mainly because the Indians used it for a battlefield. He returned, reported, and the Company decided that David was no great menace to their trade. He was subsequently left alone.

By 1806 David decided he knew the country well enough, but that it needed colonizing. Accordingly he built Kootenai House not far from Lake Windemere in 1807, canoed down the Kootenai River in 1808 and visited the so-called Flathead Indians, traded a little, resumed his way and wound up in Kootenai Lake. Later, in 1809, he built Kullyspell House on

Clark's fork of the Pend D'Orielle Lake. Nearby he also built Saleesh House. Then he and Finan McDonald—at that time the only known whites in what was to become the State of Washington—visited local tribes and David described the Spokans and Couer d'Alenes as "Pointed Heart" Indians, and the Pend D'Orielles as "Ear Pendent" Indians.

David's plan for civilizing the country included making Northwestern Indians equals to their easterly enemies by arming them, instructing them in the rudiments of Anglo-Saxon type warfare. His plan, apparently, was to create a buffer of Northwestern tribesmen which would discourage forays by the more fierce and restless Plains peoples. In this dream he was particularly fortunate to have Finan McDonald, six feet four, brawny, blue-eyed, fiery, red-whiskered and red-headed, who loved a good fight second only to exploring. In fact Finan, after teaching the Indians how to fight with guns, accompanied them into Blackfeet country on the upper Missouri and went into battle howling and gesticulating with such thorough abandon that he was exalted by his allies and struck terror into his foes. When excited, Finan's language became an admixture of French, English, Gaelic, and numerous Indian dialects. The Plains warriors who attacked or were attacked by savages from the Inland Empire came to have an enormously high regard for Finan McDonald.

In 1810 Thompson went over the mountains to Rainy Lake but had some unpleasantness in the autumn of the year due to Piegan hostility. Not strong enough to fight the Piegan—a division of Blackfeet—he sought a way back to the Oregon country by a circuitous route and discovered Athabasca Pass, which became the Hudson's Bay Company's inland avenue of trade years later. He also discovered some Nipissing and Iriquois Indians—latter true Ishmaelites of Indiandom—recruited several of them and made his way *via* the Columbia and surrounding mountains to the Kootenai, where he found a trail which led him to Clark's fork again. Among some hunters, he found another Iriquois whom he proselytized, then went back to Saleesh House only to discover that Finan had gone

to the mouth of the Little Spokane River and built another blockhouse which he'd named, appropriately, Spokane House.

Finan, his Indian admirers, and half-blood Jacques (Jaco, or Jocko) Raphael, were working on Spokane House when David arrived. After a brief rest David took the entire party over into the Colville River country where they made a pleasant camp and dilatorily whiled away about ten days whittling out a cedar canoe of considerable size. On the 3rd of July, 1811, he took one of his Iriquois, two Sanpoil Indians and five *voyageurs* and started down the Columbia "to explore this river in order to open out a passage for the interior trade with the Pacific Ocean".

En route, the Indians were friendly, many being so remote from trade routes as to have been unaffected by the degeneration which had begun to make inroads into the more easterly tribes. In fact, most of the Indians whom David's party met had never seen white men before, were fascinated and charmed. David was, also, an old hand at making Indians like him.

Near the mouth of the Snake River, David set up a pole in a clearing to which he fastened a paper with the following notice upon it:

"Know hereby that this country is claimed by Great Britain as part of its territories, and that the N.W. Company of Merchants from Canada, finding the factory for this people inconvenient for them, do hereby intend to erect a factory in this place for the commerce of the country around. D. Thompson. Junction of the Shawpatin River with the Columbia, July 8th, 1811."

He took aboard a Shahaptian ("Shawpatin") Indian and his squaw, left the two Sanpoils behind and, not far from the mouth of the Snake, met Chief Yellepit of the Walla Wallas, who had met Lewis and Clark. By the 15th of July, the entire party was within navigable distance of Astoria, below which, only a short distance away, was the Pacific Ocean. In fact, Astoria lay well within that point of the river where its mouth was widened through intercourse with the sea.

So, the country had been explored and the Indian economy disrupted and re-established as the traders wanted it. White men, half-bloods, bizarre admixtures of every conceivable quartering were up the creeks and along the rivers, trapping. Those under white aegis were far more efficient in this than Indians but the fur trade was still too hungry to enforce standards for pelts.

There were frictions, fights and raids and, while the increasing signs of trouble multiplied in Northwestern skies, David Thompson was back wintering at Saleesh House. Here through the bitter months of 1811-12, he co-ordinated his notes, observations and sextant readings, built a roaring fire and spent the lead-grey days, the crystal clear still and terrible nights, in making his map. It took him two years to complete and, after the War of 1812, he was appointed astronomer of the International Boundary Commission (1816 to 1826), to assist in pinning down the Canadian-American line from St. Regis, in Quebec Province, to the northwest angle of Lake of the Woods.

David died in 1857 at Longueuil, close to Montreal, greatly revered, honoured, and in the most abject poverty, at the age of eighty-six years. Charlotte followed him into the grave three months later, their six daughters and seven sons went into the *pot-pourri* that came to people the great Northwestern country where, doubtless, the strain still exists.

Without exception, David Thompson stands head and shoulders above run-of-the-mill explorers, adventurers and what-not, who have left behind a legacy of hardihood. It is incredible that so many historians have overlooked his contribution. Perhaps, overall, the snow-balling momentum of events that followed upon the heels of Thompson's explorations, and subsequent attempts to telescope all that occurred in the settling of the Northwest into single narrative histories, Thompson's contributions have been necessarily overlooked. Whatever the reason, no story of the fur brigades, of mountain men, the Northwest and the Oregon Country, is complete without him.

The Astorians cut a brief swath in the trade and, at the conclusion of the War in 1812, Astoria, at the mouth of the Columbia River, became Fort George, the Astor Company disintegrated, and into the transitory vacuum which followed this and other changes, came recurrent Indian trouble. Still the Hudson's Bay Company, the free trappers, Americans and Canadians, did not know who, exactly, owned the Oregon country. Law, such as there was, found expression through guns and was interpreted according to individual loyalties, ideals, and sentiments.

Naturally, then, with competition fierce and unrelenting, with confusion rampant and ownership unresolved, the Indians were caught in the middle again, as was the case earlier when the North West Company and the New North West Company were hacking away at each others throats. The results were identical in both cases so far as Indians were concerned; they didn't know who to believe or whether to believe any white man. Also, as before and increasingly, came the mountain men whose ethics were elastic, standards primitive and licentiousnesses unabated. The skill of these men with traps, guns and canniness were totally successful in completing the demoralization of the native population.

Mountain men at the Green, at Grande Ronde, indeed wherever they came together, had rip-roaring debauches. Indian excesses were expressions of primitive passion, also, but for them it might be said that they knew no better.

When the white trappers congregated it was after a long year—sometimes more—of the most hazardous and strenuous labour in the silent places of a raw, new world where minds had ample time to plan ahead and devise thrilling new experiments in revelry. In due course these found expression at the rendezvous.

Of the *voyageurs* it has been said: "They were generally a shiftless element who saved nothing and did not care to return to the towns, where they would have to go to work again. By the vicious habits into which they lapsed in their vagrant life, they earned the contempt of both Indians and whites, and they were the source of much trouble to the traders."

Degrees of depravity, ideas of what constitutes depravity, differ. At the rendezvous, *voyageurs* were no worse than Americans, no better than Indians. They were intensely loyal to their fellows. They were men whose breeding and environmental training made them capable of unbelievable endurance. They sang and roared curses, made love to Indian maidens and fought like cougars. They trapped with dedicated zeal, froze their fingers and toes in the terrible Northwestern winters, risked their lives daily, then took all their furs to a rendezvous and gambled, drank, and wenched them away. They fell insensible, were dragged by the squaws to their tipis and awoke robbed of everything they had accumulated.

They could, and did, carry one hundred and eighty pound packs of furs on their backs, at a trot, for miles on end. Their day was frequently twenty hours long and when they ate, mealtime was often no longer than twenty minutes of squatting beside canoes or packs. Like their half-blood progeny, *voyageurs* were careful not to give offence; quick to take offence: alternately religious and irreligious; tolerant of Indian abstractions; superstitious and, like the Indians they lived among, were dangerous when drunk—which was as often as opportunity afforded.

They were also vicious; as vicious as Nature was, as unpredictable as the weather which alternately froze and baked them, as deadly as the unseen forces with which they were surrounded. They were depraved as the Indians they lived among and as unconscious of any depravity—exactly as Indians were unconscious of depravity when they tore out an enemy's heart and ate it raw—because they had not and did not, live within the shadow of white-man "civilization". What appalled missionaries went unnoticed by *voyageurs*. Their laws were those of nature in the raw. The case for the *voyageurs* was as simple as that. They lived *with* nature and *by* her!

Mountain men accepted the Indian way of life. It was the only successful method of existence in the far places, proven through thousands of years, perfected through trial and error. Civilization, white-man-style, didn't belong west of the

Missouri, it wouldn't work, so the mountain men discarded it, adopted the way of the Indian, lived it, believed in it and knew it was superior in the wilderness. For this they were termed depraved.

As if the bewildering blood-mixtures among Indians, whites and French-Canadians, were not enough, there were Hawaiians who had come into the Northwest, originally, upon the ships of explorers. Spanish coastal vessels, even privateers, brought them. These dusky additions disliked Indians, were poor canoeists and pathetic trappers, but by disposition were placid, jolly, even-tempered people who could swim like eels. Their dependability was in marked contrast to the waywardness of Indians. Like the descendants of *voyageurs* who never passed up an opportunity to spread their charm, Hawaiian-Indian offspring began to appear with considerable regularity in Indian villages, trapper camps, at the various rendezvous, until in time the strain worked its way into the warp of the French-English-Canadian-American-Indian hodge-podge of inter-racial breeding which went on at a healthy rate during the dreary winters and sparkling summers of the Northwest.

Father Blanchet described a fur brigade which descended upon Vancouver in the early days as a "... hideous assemblage of persons of both sexes, stripped of all moral principle". It must have salved his outraged soul a little when, within two weeks, he had managed to baptize forty off-colour progeny, interrupt several connubial unions lacking church sanction, and perform no less than thirteen marriages.

Liaisons were expedients, certainly, but frequently they endured. Mountain men lived, laboured, and died, under circumstances which later generations scarcely believed the human body capable of enduring. Accordingly, they took release where they found it, rewards as they were presented, and, frequently, even if they had wanted to marry an Indian girl, there was no one to perform the ceremony but Indians. They indicated without bothering to profess it, that the hide tipi walls of a Nez Percé, Blackfeet, Crow or Sioux, and the sloe-eyed approval of a pretty little squaw, were sufficient

inducement to set up housekeeping; and who is to say they weren't correct?

Daniel Harmon, at one time a stockholder in the old North West Company wrote in his journal: "This day a Canadian's daughter was offered to me; and after mature consideration concerning the step I ought to take, I have fully concluded to accept . . . her, as it is customary for all gentlemen who remain for any length in this part of the world to have a female companion, with whom they can pass their time more socially and agreeably than to live a lonely life as they must do if single. If we can live in harmony together, my intention is to keep her so long as I remain in this uncivilised part of the world."

Harmon's practicality was perfectly in keeping with the time and place. Not only Indians, mountain men, *voyageurs* and Hawaiians, but the Hudson's Bay Company itself took the view that the best way to keep good men in the Northwestern country was to have them satisfied. This could best be accomplished through liaisons. However, the Company discouraged the raising of children: not especially because there was any aversion to half-bloods, but more practically because a squaw heavy with child or a trapper burdened with innumerable toddlers couldn't travel fast nor far during the trapping season. Business was paramount, liaisons were encouraged to keep the best men in the trade, but in trapping there was no place for children. However, as in most other things, this was finally up to the individual trapper and his "klootch". There were no Company edicts of prohibition one way or the other; it simply minimized the value of a large family to trappers, indicated through payments how much better off a wise man was, than a prolific man.

As the trappers increased in numbers, the tribesmen came to call them "Bostons", a term which sprang quite possibly from an occurrence in 1803 when the ship *Boston*, mastered by Captain John Salter, anchored at Nootka Sound for trade with the natives.

An Indian chieftain, one Maquina, had traded with

Americans before; had acquired a certain proficiency in the seaman's sizzling patois and in the course of a misunderstanding between himself and Captain Salter, was thoroughly and roundly cursed by the *Boston's* chief officer. Maquina understood much of what Salter called him, a fact probably unknown to Salter.

After considerable grave reflection Maquina decided that the *Boston's* officers and crew should be made to pay not only for Salter's cursing, but for other wrongs, real and imagined, out of the past. One of these was the theft of the tribesmen's fur cache by white traders while the Indians had been away fishing. Another was the killing of twenty Indians and several headmen over the theft of a ship's chisel, some years prior to the arrival of the *Boston*. The simple truth that neither of these events had any connection with Captain Salter, his crew, or even his ship, meant nothing to Maquina.

With considerable craft the chieftain laid such perfect plans that when his warriors struck all but a handful of the *Boston's* crew were annihilated. Of these, John R. Jewett lived to record the tale of butchery and after a time managed to send a note for help. This came in the form of the brig *Lydia*, also out of Boston. Jewett and companions were able to get safely aboard and, still later, the tale of what had happened to Captain Salter, the brig *Boston*, and all hands, got back to the States.

Another factor which unquestionably contributed to the sobriquet "Boston" being applied to all Americans was that the majority of American ships entering Northwestern waters were out of Boston, Massachusetts, and had it so noted on their sterns. Repetition, usage, constant association, did the rest. Americans became "Bostons" and would so remain throughout the Northwest Conquest, or up until assimilation and dismemberment of the Indians was just about complete.

Captain Salter's fate was shared by another sea captain and his ship, the *Tonquin*, this time out of New York, having left that port on the 8th of September, 1810, carrying ten genuine guns and ten wooden dummies, a crew of about twenty scamen, and thirty-three passengers.

The *Tonquin's* commander, a violent, apoplectic man named Captain Jonathon Thorn, had been commended by Decatur for gallantry at Tripoli. The ship's owner was John Jacob Astor's Pacific Fur Company. Almost from the outset there was trouble aboard. Captain Thorn insisted upon warship discipline at all times. His passengers were clerks, a few *voyageurs*, some returning trappers, and Pacific Fur Company officials, none of whom felt Thorn's kind of discipline was necessary on a merchant ship.

At the Falkland Islands Thorn put in for fresh water and when the casks were filled he caused a warning gun to be fired. Several Company men were ashore, failed to hear—or heed—the gun, and Thorn upped anchor and sailed off without them. The executives were compelled to secure a boat and row like mad for nearly four hours before they caught up. Such was the wrath of Robert Stuart, nephew of one of the men left behind, that he secured a pistol and threatened to kill Captain Thorn unless the ship stopped.

Matters were very bad by the time the *Tonquin* reached the Columbia. So was the weather. In the muddy approaches to the great river Captain Thorn ordered out a sound-boat. The sea and river were locked in wild, storming battle. Such was the First Mate's will that he went into the maelstrom after telling several friends that they would never see him again. He was correct. The boat and all hands were lost.

Whether some direct impropriety of Captain Thorn's brought about the final tragedy or not is unknown. It would appear from his previous conduct that it may have. At any rate an Indian named Kasiascall or Kasiskell, was taken aboard the *Tonquin* as an interpreter. According to this Indian when the *Tonquin* neared fateful Nootka Sound there was dissention aboard. Later, at anchor, Thorn became abusive toward the natives and was rebuked for it by Alexander MacKay, Astor's friend and partner in the enterprise. The Indians affected to become reconciled but privately they decided that Thorn should be punished. However, in view of MacKay's amiability they at first decided to spare him, hold him for ransom, then,

with usual Indian perfidy, forgot all about it when the fighting started.

MacKay warned Thorn to watch the natives but Thorn chose to ignore the injunction and didn't bother to have nets rigged over the sides as was customarily done by coastal traders to prevent too many Indians from coming aboard at one time. The crew was unarmed and unalarmed until a sailor in the rigging called down that the Indians were concealing weapons under their clothing. By then however, the deck was swarming with savages. Finally aroused, Thorn ordered the natives ashore. It was too late.

The fight was fierce and brief, probably lasting not more than five minutes. Alexander MacKay was the first man killed of the ship's company. He defended himself with a revolver, killed an Indian and was overwhelmed. Captain Thorn killed two natives with a cutlass and wounded two more. He was then struck down from behind. Five sailors in the rigging slid to the deck and managed to hole-up in a cabin. One was badly wounded. Securing arms these men poured such a deadly close-range fire into the shrieking Indians they promptly abandoned the ship. Later, a boat was lowered from the *Tonquin* and rowed hastily away, ran aground at the bay's entrance and was eventually worked up to the shore where the Indians found several exhausted seamen asleep and killed them.

Then retribution was wreaked upon the attackers in a baffling and ironic way. Knowing only a few wounded men still lived aboard the *Tonquin*, Maquina's savages paddled back to her in their canoes. They were swarming all over the vessel when a tremendous explosion completely destroyed the *Tonquin*, killed not less than two hundred Indians of both sexes and wounded many more. What caused the explosion will never be definitely ascertained. There were no white survivors. Conceivably, as some believe, a wounded man aboard laid a powder trail and touched a match to it when the Indians returned. Less likely is the possibility that the Indians themselves ignited the ship's magazine. Whatever caused the explosion, the *Tonquin* was destroyed and one way or another all hands perished.

Loss of the *Tonquin* dealt Astor's enterprise a crippling but not necessarily a fatal blow. However, what the *Tonquin* disaster didn't do, the War of 1812 did accomplish, and the loss of Alexander MacKay, so far as the Astorians were concerned, was almost as serious as the war which ended Astor's dream of a Pacific Fur Company.

Reports of the *Tonquin's* tragic end were sent in two letters to Robert Stuart's company, then at The Dalles. These letters along with some supplies were stolen by natives and Stuart didn't know of the disaster until, with his small part of Astorians, he arrived at the Company's blockhouse on the Okanagon. Afterward, Stuart started back for Astoria and *en route* picked up John Day and Ramsey Crooks, later president of the American Fur Company, who had been camping near the Umatilla River.

The savage little incidents of dissension sparked briefly here and there. The "licentious" *voyageurs*, "Bostons" and half-bloods, were more numerous than ever and the increasing signs of strife were everywhere. A mode of existence evolved gradually as the numbers of Indians were more nearly offset by the numbers of others, and no small part of the basis of this existence was founded upon treachery and warfare.

By this time, too, competition had become so fierce and the demand for furs so strong, that any means to achieve the lucrative ends were, if not always approved of, then at least tolerated so long as it was the "opposition" who suffered.

Yet, through these perilous times, the Hudson's Bay Company continued to steer a course of survival based upon adherence to its original tenets. Doctor John McLoughlin, dour, iron-willed and iron-fisted, earned the trust of the Indians by never making them a promise he didn't keep and never promising punishment that wasn't forthcoming. McLoughlin almost as much as the Company itself, became the one constant in the topsy-turvy world of anarchy, depredation, robbery and worse which free trappers had created. In the Northwestern forest shadows where lawlessness, wild foregatherings, intensive trapping, hunting, exploring and extreme rivalry of all kinds existed, John

McLoughlin was to remain a Rock of Gibraltar respected by all, coerced by none. He was born on the St. Lawrence River below Quebec of Scottish-Irish ancestry, was educated to medicine, married Alexander MacKay's widow, stood six feet four inches tall, was proportionately powerful, and came to the Oregon country at a comparatively late age: 42. Indians called him White-Headed-Eagle.

When McLoughlin came to Oregon the ravages of the epidemics of 1829 to 1832 had swept away hundreds of Indians and wiped out the Mandans almost entirely. The Indians who survived were hostile more often than not. White traders and trappers were in constant danger. The situation had degenerated so that from 1832 onward there would be no safety for whites or their friends until the last shot was fired some sixty years later.

Distrust and hatred were everywhere and the Americans, mostly free trappers, tried mightily to upset the Hudson's Bay Company's successful trading programme by inciting the Indians against McLoughlin and the Company. They never succeeded although the Indians at long last began to fear, from the numbers of the Americans and other whites, what would one day become a fact: the settlement of whites—any and all breeds of them—in their country in sufficient numbers to dispossess them.

But it was obvious to Americans and Indians alike as early as 1847 that the Company had no interest in colonizing the Oregon country. It was there for trade alone. Americans, on the other hand, with the way blazed westward from the Missouri, came in constantly increasing numbers to trade and trap, but just as often to pre-empt Indian land; to make farms, villages and settlements; to turn up great black coils of virgin earth with their ploughs; to burn off natural cover to make pasturage for their beasts; to plant orchards, destroy the Indians' game wholesale and, in time, destroy the Indians themselves.

And through the period of transition, of quiet, stealthy invasion the Hudson's Bay Company kept its promises to the

natives on the one hand and never refused a reasonable request for aid from its erstwhile enemies, competitors, and defamers, the Americans, on the other hand. Without its backing, innumerable American enterprises would have failed. Even at Fort Walla Walla and Fort Vancouver, where its interests were constantly under attack from free trappers, the Company succoured many an endangered American.

Historians have stated that the Company's policy in these instances was prompted by the unalterable fact that through the Company alone could British-made goods be had. This is true enough, yet much that Chief Factor McLoughlin handed out to Americans was never paid for, and between the lines of McLoughlin's cryptic statement made in later years can be read a certain, dour irony: "Very many of these men honourably paid, as soon as they could. . . ."

Later, after McLoughlin had retired, American gratitude was demonstrated by the deprivation of his house and lands in Oregon City, leaving him destitute. Five years after he died in poverty the State of Oregon made restitution to his heirs.

During McLoughlin's term as Factor of the Company the tide of American emigration increased greatly. So did depredations, differences, fights, and through them all he steered the Hudson's Bay Company so well that the best of all assurances that a traveller would reach his ultimate destination was when he wore a Hudson's Bay Company insignia upon his clothing. This patch became so valuable Americans borrowed it with, and more often without, permission, it being as nearly inviolate as anything was in the Northwest Territory at the time.

However, despite the steadily worsening conditions and the filling up of the country, fur brigades still operated. Typical was one led by Alexander Ross into Snake country to trade for beaver skins in 1823. Ross's journal, *Fur Hunters of the Far West*, gives a graphic description of the hardships and obstacles encountered, as well as a picture of the composition of his band. He started from Spokane House with forty men and gathered in another fifteen in Flathead country. There were two Americans, seventeen Canadians (*voyageurs*), five

half-bloods, twelve Iriquois, two Abenakis, two Nipissings, one Soulteau, two Crees, one Chinook, two Spokans, two Kootenais, three Flatheads, two Kalispells, one Pelouse, and one Snake slave. Of the seventeen Canadians, five were over sixty years of age and two were thought to be closer to seventy.

Twenty-five of the men were married, therefore twenty-five women went along. Also in tow were no less than sixty-four children. The expedition originally had three hundred and ninety-two horses: when lined out it stretched more than a mile along, the trail, was a babble of tongues, gesticulations, differences, but very little friction. No one in their sane mind would have dared undertake such a mission with such a motley crew, but Alexander Ross did—and returned with five thousand beaver skins!

By the first decade of the nineteenth century trappers working for the Missouri Fur Company discovered South Pass and Andrew Henry built a blockhouse in southeastern Idaho, called Fort Henry, which was used less than one year. In 1822 the Rocky Mountain Fur Company came into being with the same Andrew Henry as active member and the notorious Green River Rendezvous of song and story came to life. In 1824 the Hudson's Bay Company men and American trappers were jangling in the Snake country, over boundary lines, to the bewilderment and disapproval of the Snakes. Lying between disputed British and American spheres of influence this was bound to become a trouble area. Unfortunately for the Indian owners they were caught between two jaws which ground them first one way then the other. The result was what one might expect: the Snakes declared war on both sides and all white men.

Peter Skene Ogden attempted to emulate Alexander Ross's successful expedition of 1825, with results somewhat less than spectacular. He lost forty-eight men by desertion—Ogden was a martinet: another Captain Thorn—over half of whom went over to the Americans, out of his original party of seventy-five men.

Not so burdened as Ross's expedition had been, more master-

fully planned, by reason of racial affinity supposedly more compatible, and certainly better guided, Ogden's expedition was therefore, by comparison, more woefully a failure. He got a few skins, not enough to defray expenses, and in time ran across another Company party under Archibald McDonald and Thomas McKay, with which he joined forces and marched as far south as Klamath Lake before crossing the Cascades and returning northward via the picturesque Willamette Valley.

Later, Ogden retraced his steps to Klamath Lake and *en route* met American free trappers suffering in the deep snows of the mountainous country, whom he refused to sell snowshoes. In 1828, he crossed the Klamath country *via* Pitt River, Humboldt Sink, and saw Great Salt Lake. But there were no beaver worth the name in all those miles, the country southward was too warm.

In 1830 he was worrying his way southward again. In the San Joaquin Valley of California he came across a strong party of Americans under Ewing Young and diminutive Kit Carson. As a trader Ogden didn't amount to much: as a humanitarian (the showshoe incident) he appears to merit even less acclaim. Utah later eulogised him with a city (Ogden, Utah), while Ogden himself named the Humboldt River, Mary's River, which the Americans ignored by naming it Ogden's River.

Like Ogden, and, long before him, David Thompson, was the indefatigable Jedediah S. Smith, whose wide circuit of the far west was made in two trips. The first, in 1826-27, described a rough triangle from Great Salt Lake southward to a Mexican hamlet called San Diego, in California, thence northward toward the San Joaquin Valley to a point southerly of the village of Yerba Buena (San Francisco), inland across the sweltering deserts of what later became the State of Nevada, and back to the Utah country.

In 1827-28, Smith went from Monterey Bay below Yerba Buena northward on a westerly course until he touched upon the coast just below where the present-day California-Oregon line is, thence through the Oregon country along the Pacific

until he cut inland and found the Willamette River which he followed to Fort Vancouver.

Smith's course is easily traced, his hardships just as easily overlooked. Before reaching Great Salt Lake in June of 1827, he had lost seven horses from exhaustion and, when he returned to California in 1828 for the men he'd left behind, the Spanish incited Mojave Indians to attack him without warning. Out of eighteen men he lost ten killed outright and nearly all of his personal effects. With the remainder of his men he walked to San Gabriel where he left two badly wounded men. Subsequently, the antagonistic Spaniards seized two of Smith's Indians, one of whom departed this world under torture while the other survived cruelty only to be sentenced to death for guiding an American into Spanish territory.

Destitute, Smith went north to Monterey where the Spanish authorities were presented with alternative dilemmas of permitting Smith to languish in their Garden of Eden indefinitely, or of presenting him with enough supplies to get him out of the country. They did the latter and ordered him out of the Province. He went northward *via* the Sacramento River and rested at a fork in the stream which to this day bears the appellation, "American Fork", in memory of his visit.

By April, 1823, Smith was travelling northwesterly toward the coast. He had nineteen men with him. Hecabouts, two deserted and afterward he found and followed the Umpqua River until his camp was attacked while Jed was out exploring.

Upon returning to camp he found it a shambles, his precious journals were missing and fifteen of his men lay dead. With extreme caution he made his way to Fort Vancouver where he found two other survivors, one of whom was John Turner. Factor McLoughlin sent Indians searching for other survivors and ordered Tom McKay to make a show of force to the hostiles involved. This was done. McKay found Smith's journals and bales of pelts, refused to buy any of the stolen goods from the Indians and demanded their return under pain of punishment. The effects were handed over and subsequently Factor

McLoughlin purchased the pelts from Smith for about twenty-five thousand dollars.

Jedediah Smith eventually made his way back over the Divide to the rendezvous of free trappers—with just exactly *one* of the original thirty-three men who had accompanied him, out of both expeditions! In gratitude to John McLoughlin, he insisted that the Americans make their Fall hunt east of the Great Divide, not west of it in Hudson's Bay Company's territory.

A survivor of Jed Smith's disastrous adventures in the Oregon country was John Turner who, returning to Oregon later, was ambushed once more by Indians. Four of his companions were killed. Turner, Will Bailey and George Gay managed to reach Fort Vancouver more dead than alive. The three men became unregenerate Indian-haters.

In 1837 a company was formed by Ewing Young for the purpose of purchasing cattle in California and trailing them northward to Oregon where settlers were clamouring for beef. Among Young's riders were John Turner, Will Bailey, and George Gay. After successfully procuring cattle the group returned northward by way of the trail across the Siskiyou Mountains. Here George Gay and Will Bailey came upon an Indian man and boy. Without a word both men drew their guns and shot the adult Indian dead. Naturally the lad spread news of the murder, over which aroused tribesmen converged upon the drover's camp.

Young had a double guard posted in spite of which the natives got close enough so that when they began their attack Ewing Young's horse was killed and George Gay was painfully wounded before white firepower dispersed the attackers.

Bailey and Gay had been presented with an opportunity to kill an Indian. Had John Turner been handy he would have acted exactly as his friends had. An Indian was an object of the especial and deep hatred of each of these men, not without some justification. The fact remains, however, that this very attitude was accountable for much that followed, for with extremely rare exceptions all whites now held Indians to be

worthless except as targets. Tales of atrocities would keep this hatred alive for decades yet to come. Neither side was less guilty than the other but, if one seeks for a reason which can be stated in a few words for the eternal warring, one might do well to bear in mind the words of General George Crook, who came later to know, and vanquish, Indians:

- “Greed and avarice on the part
of the whites—in other words,
• the almighty dollar—is at the
bottom of nine-tenths of all
our Indian troubles.”

The Oregon country by this time had several strong settlements. There was no longer much doubt as to who ruled it; Americans were taking up land, exploiting, in so far as was possible, the forests, rivers, gold fields, plains, deserts. If ownership hadn't yet been satisfactorily resolved politically, at least it had been to the American with the plough and gun. While Americans might glance askance at the British, they positively glared at Indians—any and all of them. The killing of one Indian by Gay and Bailey was in itself a small thing—if not to the Indian at least in an overall sense—but it definitely serves as an excellent example of the difference between American and Hudson's Bay Company methods of treating natives.

The Company controlled Indians by trading with them only when they were at peace with the whites, and tractable. It punished transgressors impersonally and did not kill them out of hatred as Gay and Bailey had done, but when its men went out after a native who had broken a Company law, robbed or killed a white, they did not return until they either had the offender in tow or had tried and executed him wherever he was apprehended.

All of this was simple, rigid and understandable to Indians. They understood force, the simplest of elemental rules; they lived by force themselves and consequently violated Company rules only when they thoroughly understood what retribution

would be if they were caught. The Company never vacillated, never conciliated, never changed its policy. It was constant, strict, and fair, things Indians understood perfectly because they were backed by force.

A certain British aloofness inspired respect, also. No Hudson's Bay Company executive laboured. Indians were used to till the ground, load fur bales and unload cargoes. They had Indian women perhaps or Indian slaves, but Company men lived and acted in a totally feudal, masculine, way. This was something Indians approved of—male supremacy in all things.

From first to last the Company's policy of withholding the right to trade or visit Company forts, from hostiles or Indians thought to be contemplating violence which would disrupt the normal and peaceful pursuits of trade, was a tremendous weapon. Without Company guns, powder, shot, blankets, iron pots, tomahawks and other necessities of life which the white floodtide had brought into the Northwest, the Indian was destitute. He had come to rely entirely upon these things in his everyday existence. By this simple and effective method of control, the Company's posts and personnel were safe when the rest of the Northwest, and its inhabitants, were drowned in blood.

Another factor which contributed considerably to the comparative safety of whites in the far west was the occurrence of those terrible epidemics which had depopulated entire Indian villages. The tribesmen were just beginning to recover from these when the full might of American emigration burst over them. Except for this, winning the west would unquestionably have taken much longer than it did.

In so far as Americans taking liquor to the Indians was concerned, it most assuredly made the natives debased and easy prey, but it also unleashed, upon those closest, the primitive ferocity. Initial fatalities were almost exclusively American.

So, throughout the early history of the Northwest, the Oregon country in particular, two things stand foremost. One, the Hudson's Bay Company's continued success in the face of towering obstacles. Two, the lack of co-operation

among Americans of all classes and types who went west to buttress the United States' claims upon Oregon Territory.

Except for its numbers, the tide of emigration that seeped, trickled, flowed, then flooded over the Northwest, overwhelming everything in its way, would have caused a colossal outburst.

As the people came, fanned out, settled in the Columbia River valley, up along the Willamette, and elbowed Indians away from worthwhile lands, tension grew and trouble loomed greater each passing day. All that would be required for the Indian economy to collapse entirely would be for the fur trade to collapse. When that happened—if that happened—Oregon would have its own “dark and bloody ground”.

Unlike eastern and southern Plains Indians the Northwestern natives weren't imbued with undying animosities. They could and did discuss the influx of “Bostons”. Even where dislikes existed among the tribes, the common, more imminent and very real threat to all, overshadowed lesser frictions; it claimed and got, full priority.

Councils were held in the dark places of limitless Oregon forests. Warnings were sounded and fears expressed. A nebulous, vague stirring began among the Indians. Up to now the killing of whites had fallen into two categories: retribution and robbery. Now the whites were over-running the country. Soon there would be no game, no good land left—no place for the Indians!

CHAPTER TWO

Trouble and Sources of Trouble: God and Emigration

THE overall importance of Christianity to Oregon lay in the fact that the first permanent American settlement in the Territory was established by Methodists. Later, there were other denominational missions to prove God had crossed the Rockies and by the time the Catholics arrived they were thought darkly to be reinforcements for the British. The question of ownership, of sovereignty, was still moot.

In 1834, Jason Lee founded a Methodist Mission in the Willamette Valley. Next, Marcus Whitman, big, strong and friendly, founded a mission at Waiilatpu not far from Walla Walla. Another mission at Lapwai was established by the Reverend Henry H. Spalding.

Spalding was dark and intense, the exact opposite of Marcus. Spalding had been an unsuccessful suitor for the hand of Marcus's wife, Narcissa. Narcissa Whitman was a voluptuous honey-blonde who had, in the crossing from the States, baked white bread to entice heathens—not always Indian—into her husband's fold. Mountain man Joe Meek wouldn't attend Marcus's services but he persuaded an Indian to do so and, when the native had his reward for attendance, a large slice of white bread, Joe took the bread and sent the Indian back to quaver through another hymn for more bread. Joe would never forget the rapture of gazing upon Narcissa Whitman.

With the establishment of missions, another link was added to the chain of possession which began east of the Missouri, spanned a continent and culminated in their rude but industrious yards, gardens and corrals. None of the early missions

was much but all were homes-away-from-home, and emigrants invariably made their way to Marcus Whitman and the Reverend Henry Spalding. They were received in God's name, their needs attended to in so far as was possible, their routes plotted and information given regarding the best areas where land might be "taken up".

The fur trade was still going on but barter in commodities other than furs, traps, guns and animals, was widening the scope of Northwestern commerce. Settlers as well as trappers, *voyageurs* and Indians, wanted articles which would make existence in Oregon a little less primitive, a little less harsh. Pack trains from the States and Canada grew in size, in burden, and in the variety of things they transported. The anaemic economy of the far west was becoming stronger, fortunately, for within the foreseeable future the fur trade was to dwindle and die.

When Indians voiced open resentment over the pre-empting of their lands another missionary, the Reverend Samuel Parker, assured them that the Federal Government would make full and satisfactory restitution. For a while this sufficed, but not for long; after a time the natives began to doubt, to lose faith. They trusted Parker but meanwhile the flood of "Bostons" had increased tenfold. The alternative was to order settlers out of their hunting countries. This was done and in most cases, but not all, the settlers fell back upon the villages. A few resolute families remained upon their farms.

Then there was a lull.

In 1842, Doctor Elijah White, Government Agent, made a treaty with the Cayuses and Nez Percés by which the Indians agreed to a mode of conduct toward settlers which was based upon passivity if not downright friendliness. This accounted for the uneasy peace which lasted for over a year.

Meanwhile, the whites kept coming, gaining strength, taking what land caught their fancy, and assuming an attitude of sovereignty not technically theirs. In 1843 they formed a provisional government for the purpose of protection and the

administration of justice. They dared flex their muscles a little because each new day saw them growing stronger. Their *underlying* fear was still the British, not Indians.

The British still exploited the country in accordance with the extension of the 1827 agreement between England and the United States concerning ownership of the Northwest. However, their efforts at colonizing were half-hearted and unsuccessful. Aside from the fact that the Oregon country was beyond the ends of the earth so far as British nationals were concerned, England in those days enjoyed considerable prosperity at home. Why cross a pirate infested ocean and trudge over Indian harassed trails through a land so filled with natural obstacles as to be all but impassable, just for a small farm in a place called Oregon? English emigrants were few and far between in contrast to the tide of Americans that swelled with each summer and dwindled through the winter.

Still believing the British were their rivals, still totally blind to native reaction, the Americans next set up an Executive Committee of three and, later on, a governor, a supreme judge and a single-chamber legislature of nine members. Quite naturally the next step was to gain some sort of recognition from the National Government. Eastward, this became a warm issue. Public opinion was sharply divided. Old-time isolationists clung to their aversion to anything as far away, as misunderstood and as potentially expensive as Oregon. The States had groped their way through two wars with England and conservatives shuddered at the prospect of another war. On the other hand Britain, as the "forever-enemy", was a synonym for Battle Cry to a host of common Americans. The heritage of *piqué* still existed, toned down considerably perhaps, but still smouldering.

However, this danger was removed in 1846 when a joint commission established the forty-ninth parallel from the Rocky Mountains to the Juan de Fuca Straits as the boundary line between American and British possessions in the Northwest. Two years later, in 1848, Oregon officially became an

American Territory and the first Provincial Governor, Joseph Lane, arrived in the country in March, 1849.

There was no physical evidence of *divided ownership*. To a settler a fence meant something; a mythical line drawn upon a map he had never seen, meant nothing. For decades the majority of Oregonians near the boundary line would buy their land from both Britain and the United States.

Still, everything looked well. The tangle of ownership which had lain so long was indubitably settled. Settlers could record land titles and if Indians didn't like it, well, they could do what the British had done—retire!

1849 brought another crisis to offset Territorial status. Gold was discovered down in California. The affect was two-fold and confusing. First, settlers left Oregon in droves. Secondly, emigrants from the States literally poured into the coastal west. When gold was also discovered in Oregon the overflow from California spilled northward. Like the current of an ocean the white tide rolled first one way then the other way. The plains filled with wagon trains; the overflow of empires poured westward. Indians, not just Northwestern Indians but all Plains Indians, arose in alarm. Whites were like "leaves on the trees, minnows in the rivers, blades of grass . . ." and each individual one of them was possessed of a belly.

Indian game lands were invaded, hunting grounds and grazing plains over-run. To the Indian this meant not just famine, which he foresaw; it also meant eventual dispossession and starvation. To avoid these spectres he would fight to his last breath.

In Oregon, immediately prior to the Gold Rush, Indian hostilities had already begun. A chieftain of the Wascopum, or Dalles Indians, named Cockstock, an ardent and outspoken dissident, took up the hatchet in 1844. He led warriors against settlers in isolated valleys with signal success. Eventually, emboldened by lack of concerted resistance, he went over by Oregon City and killed and plundered almost at will. When tales of his atrocities became known, Agent White offered a

one hundred dollar reward for Cockstock's apprehension. A unique stipulation tacked onto the capture was that the chief be tried by Nez Percé or Cayuse tribesmen in accordance with Indian law. However, what surely would have proven an historically stimulating affair was never to be.

Chief Cockstock was eventually cornered by hard-riding settlers. He put up a vicious fight. When it was all over the chieftain was dead and two whites died of wounds acquired during the battle.

Like the 1837 killing by Gay and Bailey, Cockstock's taking off was an isolated, local affair. Full-scale hostilities were still in the future but from 1844 on they were in the making. Conceivably the tempo was stepped up because of the influx of miners. Where the blame lay none can say. As with the discovery of Oregon itself, no way has yet been devised to ascertain who the first transgressor was.

A small band of Indians killed an ox on the Talautin Plains. Settlers immediately got to horse, surrounded the Indians and demanded in payment eight good horses and a rifle. The Indians paid—they had no alternative—but it rankled. Things like this occurred constantly; small, isolated affairs that multiplied and kept the animosity deep and alive.

A group of progressive Indians from the area of Marcus Whitman's mission decided to go down to California and buy cattle to stock their range. They were respected Indians, making progress along the white man's road.

After pooling resources they chose as leader a chieftain's son. They travelled southward in good order, molested no one and in turn were not molested until they were nearing the goldfields, when a gang of bandits sprang upon them from ambush. When the battle was over the highwaymen had either been killed or routed. The Indians then rounded up twenty-two abandoned horses. Later, arriving at the settlements with their prizes they ran into a not uncommon situation. The outlaws had stolen the horses which they had abandoned. Now, men came forward and laid claim to the animals. The Indians explained how they had acquired the horses and

claimed ownership by right of victory over enemies. Such title in Indian eyes was the best title of all.

But there were factors of the times which made what next occurred unavoidable. In the first place the Americans had recently emerged triumphant from their Mexican War. All Americans were anti-Mexican, especially in places such as California, former Mexican provinces where the population was predominantly "greaser" (Mexican or Spanish-American).

In the second place, an Indian—any Indian—was not only similar in pigmentation to Mexicans; he was, if one believed only half the grisly tales of atrocities with which the West was filled, far worse. A good Indian was a dead Indian.

Finally, when the Indians refused to relinquish their claims upon the horses, saying no matter who the former owners were, title by conquest and physical possession was the best and truest title of all, they put themselves squarely in the way for a fight.

Of course, there was a fight. Before it was over the Indians had lost heavily. Among the slain was the chieftain's son. Those who survived and managed to escape returned to Oregon with their tale of tragedy. More faggots of hatred added to the fire of Indian-American discord.

Jesse Applegate's surveying party in 1846 met some discomfitted emigrants who had been raided by Rogue River tribesmen. Their horses had been stampeded. Of course, Applegate and the emigrants made up a posse and went after the marauders. There was a fight, several Indians and two white men were slain. The horses were not recovered.

South of the Oregon-California line, the Modocs and Klamaths attacked a wagon train of Oregon-bound emigrants in mid-November, 1846, killing and wounding a number of whites.

Such things were happening too often, too regularly, to be termed isolated instances any longer. Down the Klamath River in Northern California a band of miners tracked Indians to their rancheria, surrounded it, attacked, captured the natives who attempted to flee, fired their brush-shelter village, knocked the captives senseless and threw their carcasses into the flames.

In total, these local affairs amounted to a state of war without benefit of an actual declaration by either side. Incidents of murder, of pitched battles and of homesteads being attacked, increased steadily. As 1846 limped along to its close the ferocity and depravity, increased apace. Troops would not arrive in the Northwest until 1848; the United States had its hands full southward where the Mexican War was in full swing. Soldiers couldn't be spared and even those recruited expressly for Oregon service were shunted instead to Mexico.

The situation became desperate. Vigilante units sprang into existence. Settlers in the more remote places banded together for mutual protection. The Indians also formed alliances. By 1847, when no less than five thousand whites rolled across the plains, leaders like Kamiakin and Old Joseph and Tilaukit became sufficiently alarmed at the number of whites, and the steadily deteriorating conditions between Indians and whites, openly to express their opinions of what must ensue. Primarily they were vastly disturbed over the white invasion. They wanted peace, they said, but more than peace they wanted their country intact.

The emigrants were wary of Indians but they were not sufficiently concerned about them to relinquish a dream. They had horses, cattle and sheep; they had vision and families and their two strong arms with which to carve out a home in the West. Back east, they had been plagued by slavers and abolitionists; in Oregon a comparable annoyance was Indians. They had shrugged clear of one; they would shrug clear of the other.

Mercantile establishments sprang up in Oregon City. in Salem, and in half a dozen outposts and villages. Among the other commodities the pack trains brought were pneumonia, smallpox, measles—more serious to an aborigine with his total lack of resistance than to the carriers who had brought them.

While disease spread, the question of hunting grounds, livestock ranges and ownership of emerald valleys, came up more strongly than ever. So far as the land itself was con-

cerned, the Indians might, in time, have concluded it was not important enough to die over. The matter of game was an altogether different affair. Like their cousins of the Great Plains, Northwestern Indians were dependent upon, and appalled by, the slaughter of bear, antelope, deer, buffalo, and lesser animals, which attended the settlement of their country by the Bostons.

As hunters, the Indians depended almost exclusively upon game for their wherewithal: not only for food but clothing, housing, all the fundamental needs and quite a number of the conveniences which they had developed over tens of thousands of years. Their economy also included Hudson's Bay Company iron pots and knives. Of what use was an iron pot if there was no venison to cook in it or a bear full of acorns shot by the hunter if the carving of the meat with a steel knife was attended with the need to slice it so thin no one got enough? Their way of life was threatened, the Indians saw; more, even, their very lives. No warrior fights more savagely than a hungry one.

Councils were held and boundaries laid out beyond which no white man must go. Alliances were formed, renewed, and with his back figuratively to the wall, the Indian was ready to make his last stand.

The flames of unrest, distrust, hatred and fear spread. White people continued to pour into the Oregon country; to brush aside the idea of an Indian owning anything. When expedient, promises were made with absolutely no intention of keeping them. Killing increased on both sides. All the councils held in all the dark forests of the Northwest could not hold back what was coming. *A good Indian was a dead Indian!* And Indians *stole*. Whites never stole, they appropriated.

The fur trade collapsed.

The Indian had, previously, enjoyed a certain dollar equality with whites. When the demand for furs died, so did the Indians' purchasing power. Of course, the Indian had always been a thief. Theft among Indians was never disreputable. Far from it. Individual raiding or warfare was

conducted along exactly the same lines with Indians as it was among whites. To the victor belonged the spoils. The difference now, was that the settlers saw no similarity between their own modes of conduct and the modes of conduct of Indians.

An Indian might spend weeks observing a white settler's habits in order to steal his horses without being caught. When done successfully, this was a *coup* for the warrior. Settlers would, of course, howl that they had been robbed, which they had, but they had been robbed as an enemy is robbed—an enemy to the nation of Indians—not in violation of any law existing between the two races!

Conversely, the whites were by far the better thieves for they stole entire territories, but that was of course, quite all right. One should bear in mind when wading through the charges and counter-charges which accompany all records of Indian wars, that Indians always *stole*, and that white men simply *conquered*.

Rarely, indeed, was there a man whose sense of justice was unimpaired by the colour of his skin. Such a man was Provisional Governor Abernathy.

In 1846, Abernathy had forwarded a message to the legislative assembly requesting that Indian villages be surveyed in order to establish lines beyond which settlers had no right to go. In part, Abernathy's statement said: ". . . The Indians inhabited these villages previous to our arrival and should be protected by us." He should have said "protected *from* us".

Three months later, on the 4th of March, 1847, an Oregon newspaper told of the killing of a man named Newton by Indians in the upper Umpqua River country, cited many instances of horse stealing by Indians and wound it all up with a denunciation as follows: ". . . They have been destroying cattle on Taulatin Plains, they are in trouble with the settlers, and here in our midst we are uncommoded by them, indeed recently at Clackamas a citizen was fired upon by one of these people."

On the 22nd of July, 1847, the same newspaper stated that

a man named Ramsey was killed and that the Indian slayers had threatened to kill other settlers. The occasion for this disturbance was said to have been afforded by a trader named George Greer, who, in pursuit of his business among the tribesmen, was supplying them with liquor.

Greer allegedly defied anyone to stop him. A posse was promptly organized and despatched to investigate. The charges were found to be not only true, but George Greer was found to be a rough individual. When the possemen tried to arrest him he took to the woods. Later he secured a canoe and the posse pursued him in a like manner. With the posse gaining on him and tiring from all his exhaustive efforts, Greer doubled back upon his pursuers and did his best to upset their crafts. He was eventually taken.

Liquor, bane of the Hudson's Bay Company, was at the root of much of the trouble but as an accessory, not as a causative factor. By 1847 the Indians, drunk or sober, were ready and willing to go to war. Liquor unquestionably heightened their frenzy yet they never fought solely to obtain it nor simply because they had a skin full of it.

As in all periods of unrest, suspicion, hatred and deteriorated regard among rivals, there had to be one especial spark to touch off the trouble. In mid-eighteen hundred, in Oregon, there was the Whitman Massacre.

Marcus Whitman was forty-five years old in 1847. He knew, as did all settlers in the Northwest, that peril lay on every side of him. Narcissa, at the time of her murder, was thirty-nine years old, as beautiful and voluptuous as ever. They had had one child born to them, a daughter, who had been drowned when two years of age.

Causes for the Whitman Massacre have been variously ascribed to a number of reasons but it would appear that the most reliable explanation is the fact that the mission with its expanding enterprises, was a hub of American imperialism in the far west: a point of focus for resentful Indians. Emigrants found succour, encouragement and guidance, at Waiilatpu. From its yard they fanned out in every direction to take up

land. Perhaps this alone would not have brought about the massacre. Perhaps another significant episode, historically accurate yet prophetically unfortunate, incited the killings equally with Indian unrest over white infiltration.

Joe Lewis, a half-blood from Maine who had come west with another named Jacques Finley, told the Cayuse Indians that Marcus was planning to exterminate them all by poisoning the tribe a few at a time. As ridiculous as this now sounds, there are two factors which must be noted. One is that, vocationally, Marcus Whitman was a doctor of medicine as well as a missionary. Two: during the Fall of the year an emigrant train had passed through which had been troubled with measles. This disease found its way among the Indians. As many as five a day died from it, and they were still dying when Lewis and Finley disclosed Whitman's "plot" to poison the Cayuses. Before the epidemic was to run its course over half the tribes would perish from it.

Then William Gray, "mechanic" at Waiilatpu, added fuel to the fire. Annoyed because Indians crept into the mission garden and stole melons off the vine, he warned the trespassers that punishment would be forthcoming if they didn't desist. When the thefts continued Gray hit upon a scheme to stop them. He injected a jolt or two of a powerful cathartic into the melons and left them upon the vines. The result can be imagined. Certain now that there was a conspiracy afoot to poison them, the Indians held a council.

Marcus had just returned from a trip with Henry Spalding in the latter part of November, 1847, and the mission was filled with sick and dying Indians. A good many whites, also, were down with the measles, but, unlike Indians, they understood the nature of their ailment. No evil spirit or poison was killing them, so they expected to recover and did recover. The Cayuses did not expect to survive and therefore most of them did not.

On the 29th of November, Marcus held a brief burial service for the children of a Cayuse headman who had died. In the early afternoon Chief Tamsucky—who had once been repulsed by

Narcissa—in company with other Indians called upon Marcus at his house. They claimed to be after medicine. While Marcus was standing in front of Tamsucky the chieftain struck him either two or three times in the head with his tomahawk and all hell broke loose. The visitation by the headmen had been a conspiracy, which was immediately obvious, and the striking down of Marcus had been the signal to attack. Other Indians lounging about began at once to fire upon the mission's staff.

Narcissa flung Marcus into the dining-room and put a pillow under his head. She bent low and asked him if he knew her. Marcus replied that he did. She then asked him what she could do to stop the bleeding. He said there was nothing she could do.

Narcissa then went to a window. The yard was a bedlam. Indians and mission retainers were running in all directions. Out of nowhere a bullet came and struck Narcissa under the left arm, high in the chest. She collapsed. Some women in the house carried her upstairs, then brought her back downstairs again with the din of massacre going on all around them. Indians burst into the house, shot Narcissa again, twice, and she died.

Eleven of the mission's people, including both Whitmans, were killed. Those of the survivors who escaped made their way to Fort Walla Walla—which wasn't really a fort in 1847 but rather a rough log building more blockhouse than fort.

At the mission, the Cayuses mutilated the bodies. The wounded had their brains blown out at close range. Much of the hacking at the corpses was done with axes.

The Indians came close to getting Henry Spalding also, but *en route* to Waiilatpu he heard of the massacre and fled to the Nez Percés, who hadn't killed any whites yet—wouldn't, in fact, for almost thirty years yet to come.

When the first relief party came up, the mission was as still as a tomb. Narcissa's face was criss-crossed with the lashes from a heavy quirt, presumably Tamsucky's, but she had not been scalped.

Later, Narcissa was buried along with the others but had to be re-buried because wolves dug her up and ate the meat off her legs.

When the Indians had departed after the massacre they had taken along some hostages, all women and children. Among them was Lorinda Bewley who had intended to winter at the mission as a guest of the Whitman's. She wound up in the lodge of Chief Five Crows who was not a participant in the massacre. In fact Five Crows, while anti-white, was so upset and angry over the slaughter that he refused to feed or extend hospitality to the killers. Five Crows found Lorinda attractive and wanted to marry her. The girl refused. Five Crows then "bent over backwards" in his efforts to woo and win her, ultimately promising they would go and live among the whites if she would marry him. She still refused and Five Crows kept her as a pet until she was eventually rescued. In the parlance of the eighteen-forties, Lorinda was "compelled to submit" to him.

Most prominent aftermath of the Whitman Massacre was the fury of the whites, as much at the Federal Government which had up to that time done nothing to protect them from the very thing that had happened at Waiilatpu, as at the Indians.

The Territory seethed. Petitions were circulated, signed and forwarded to Washington. Levies of homespun militia were organized. Settlers went Indian hunting with a vengeance and the exact thing they professed an inability to understand in Indians, they did themselves. They killed *any* Indian for the crimes of the Cayuses at Waiilatpu.

A little under two weeks after the massacre, Governor Abernathy warned the Legislative Assembly an Indian war was imminent. An official decision to apprehend and punish the killers was speedily arrived at and, on the 9th of December, 1847, it was undertaken to raise a regiment of volunteers to carry the war to the Cayuse tribesmen.

Fifty men under capable Henry A. G. Lee were sent at once to The Dalles to protect that community from Indians, should

hostilities upon a large scale erupt. A sidelight to this raising of an armed body of men, which ultimately numbered five hundred, is that the financing was done through personal and popular subscription and the Hudson's Bay Company made the *materiel* available on credit to individual Americans although it could not, for obvious reasons, sell the means to wage war to the United States Territory of Oregon.

Settlers did their part. They put at the disposal of the volunteers wheat, horses, clothing, ammunition, and whatever was needed to launch a war.

But, before the war was openly prosecuted, the Legislative Assembly sent a resolution to Provisional Governor Abernathy suggesting that he appoint three emissaries to go to Walla Walla and hold a council with the Indians with a view to preventing an alliance between other Indians and the hostile Cayuses. No one wanted an Indian war. Everyone wanted the Whitman murderers brought to justice but they did not want to do anything which would bring about a general Indian uprising. Oddly enough, Oregon's Bishop Blanchet sent the Governor an almost identical suggestion which he had received from the Nez Percés themselves. The Governor promptly appointed Henry A. G. Lee, Robert Newell and Joel Palmer, as emissaries to the Indians.

While the lull was in process, Governor Abernathy decided to prepare for the worst. Accordingly he sent Jesse Applegate and a bodyguard of fifteen men with an appeal to California's Governor Mason. Applegate was turned back at the Siskiyou by deep snow.

Abernathy then considered sending the appeal by sea, but no ship was due in the Columbia until March. Oregon was isolated and in a dilemma. Whatever was to be done must be done by her settlers.

The Cayuses, meanwhile, fearful of the retribution they felt certain was *en route*, sent runners to other tribes, as anticipated by the whites, bearing the false story that the Bostons were preparing to wage a war of extermination against all Indians. This was credited in a few camps but, by and large,

the unaffected tribesmen knew the Cayuses as a treacherous and unreliable people and refused to be drawn into what was fast approaching. If they came in at all, they said, it would be independently of the Cayuses. However, among the believers were several bands of Palouses who made preparations for fighting.

When Major Henry A. G. Lee arrived at The Dalles on New Year's Day, 1848, he immediately ran into trouble. The supplies for his troops were inadequate. There wasn't enough warm clothing, forage for their mounts was scanty, and the amount of food and ammunition handy was far less than required. The volunteers became disgruntled; they had been promised a dollar and a half a day but every one of them knew Oregon Territory had no money.

They were bored, also. There was nothing to do and no threat of Indians. They cut wood, built fires and stayed as warm and dry as possible. Then, on the 8th of January, some volunteers who were out foraging ran across some Cayuse Indians driving a large band of livestock. They assumed the livestock had been stolen from settlers. What particularly irked them was the open and flagrant way the Indians drove their herd past The Dalles. What appeared to the soldiers to be supreme arrogance, however, was not at all such, for the Cayuses had been assured by the Reverend Spalding, among others, that there were to be no reprisals for the Whitman Massacre provided that the actual murderers were handed over. None of the wanted men was among the herders the foragers saw.

As far as most Indians were concerned the Wailatpu incident was closed pending the apprehension of those immediately responsible for it. Now, however, when the volunteers came boiling out after them, they were abruptly made aware of a difference of opinion among the whites over the matter of reprisals.

The pursuit of the Cayuses was a sad beginning for the Cayuse War. Many of the volunteers were afoot and consequently never got near the mounted Indians. Some of the mounted men did better. There was a hot little skirmish in

which three or four Indians were killed and a volunteer, Sergeant Berry, was wounded. The livestock, which incidentally belonged to the Indians and hadn't been stolen, was scattered far and wide.

The following day Major Lee sent a detachment of his "Army" to the nearby camp of Siletza, a De Chute tribal spokesman, who had been roughly handled by the Cayuses for refusing to participate in the Whitman Massacre. The result of this whirlwind visit was sixty (allegedly) Cayuse horses plus some bewildered and deeply troubled Indians.

Elsewhere, other groups of volunteers were organizing. Among the French-Canadians at French Prairie, previously thought to be a pro-British hot-bed, a company was formed, armed and outfitted. It was commanded by volunteer Colonel Cornelius Gilliam, veteran of the Black Hawk War and the Seminole War; a captain under Zachary Taylor in the Mexican War; Captain of State Militia of Missouri in the actions to expel Mormons from Missouri and, later, a member of the Missouri Legislature. Gilliam struck out for The Dalles with his volunteers breathing all manner of threats. Gilliam himself was convinced some dark kind of a coalition between the Hudson's Bay Company and the Catholics was behind the Cayuse War.

In a drumhead pronouncement Gilliam threatened to "pull down Fort Vancouver" around the ears of the Company. The Hudson's Bay people thought for awhile that he might try to do it. The Chief Factor wrote Provisional Governor Abernathy about Gilliam and was sent back a soothing reply which reassured him until Colonel Gilliam with Joel Palmer and two hundred and twenty lusty volunteers appeared at the gates of Vancouver. Gilliam and Palmer, however, simply sought supplies, bought eight hundred dollars worth—on credit—and departed.

At The Dalles, Gilliam met Henry Lee, listened to Lee's tale of the recent skirmish and read Governor Abernathy's several orders to refrain from making indiscriminate war against Indians and to concentrate upon apprehending the

Whitman killers only. He growled, and with Lee plus one hundred and twenty-eight mounted volunteers, started after more stolen cattle he had heard about, and all cattle-stealing Indians.

Near the Deschutes River he sent Henry Lee on ahead to see if he could locate an Indian village. Lee found one but the Indians had fled, abandoning it. There were only two old squaws and a crippled buck left behind. These were killed. Lee destroyed the village and started back to join Gilliam.

Meanwhile, the enraged natives had circled around behind Lee and when his detachment went clattering down a narrow defile the hostiles rolled boulders down upon them. Miraculously not a man or horse was injured.

On the 30th of January, 1848, Gilliam moved his entire command out, in pursuit of the hostiles, who were eventually overtaken and attacked. The battle began as a skirmish, for the Cayuses would scatter, then slip back and snipe. In the initial exchanges, Gilliam's settlers accounted for not less than twenty Indians. The exact number, as invariably would be the case, it was impossible to ascertain, for the Indians snatched up fallen warriors and dragged them away even at great personal risk. One soldier was slightly wounded.

This went on for several days. The Indians would flee, hide, snipe. Two soldiers were eventually killed, another was accidentally shot by a nervous sentry and two others were wounded by arrows.

Back at the Cascades, Joel Palmer, now Superintendent of Indian Affairs for Oregon Territory, and Robert Newell, Commissary General of the Army, were discovering that someone had swiped a goodly portion of the Army's supplies—taking half a barrel of flour, for example, and making up the lost weight with stones. Then Tom McKay came up with another contingent of French-Canadian volunteers and a little cannon they had succeeded in bringing over the Cascades in a blinding snowstorm.

Governor Abernathy sent a suggestion to the Army Commissioners that Gilliam's command was to move to Waiilatpu

where peace makers were to hold a council with the Indians. Gilliam, grim and confident after his successful running fight—with the little cannon and five hundred volunteers—left a token force to protect The Dalles and undertook the trek for Waiilatpu.

His presence turned out to be fortunate for, when the command arrived upon the spot where the Commissioners intended to hold their council, they found, not the leaders and a few subdued bodyguards, but a painted, feathered, fully armed and arrayed contingent of not less than a thousand Indians. It transpired that by far the majority of these had come along merely as spectators, but even so, warrior for warrior the two parties were fairly evenly matched.

When the Commissioners started forward under a white flag the Indians ordered them back. An *impasse* ensued during which each side appraised the other. The country, being open and more or less free of brush and trees, was satisfactory to the settlers. It was not satisfactory to the Indians, however, who much preferred fighting from cover.

When the Commissioners were safely back among the soldiers, Colonel Gilliam marched straight toward the hostiles. The Indians watched this for awhile, then wheeled their horses and rode madly and provocatively up and down the sides of the column. A little, rippling burst of harmless gunfire followed. No one was injured on either side.

Among the hostiles was Lorinda Bewley's ardent swain, Five Crows. Riding with him was another leader, Gray Eagle. The latter swerved in close to Tom McKay's French-Canadians, recognized McKay, and gestured with his rifle in a threatening manner. McKay instantly shot Gray Eagle through the head, killing him. Five Crows also got a little too close, and received a musket ball through the arm, which was thus broken.

Seasoned Indian fighter Gilliam, anticipating an Indian attack upon his supply wagons or packtrain, had the command split up, each half marching on the far side of the supplies. When the Indians came too close he launched short charges at them. This strategy not only protected the drove of beef

cattle, wagons and packtrain, it also resulted in a comfortable score of Indian casualties.

The hostiles were unaccustomed to this method of fighting. Heretofore, settlers had bunched up when attacked, barricaded up in a log house and fought from standing positions. In this case, the volunteers never slackened their marching pace and through their vicious little charges managed to kill quite a number of warriors. At the same time they made it impossible for the Cayuses to get in close enough to do the settlers any damage, although they did manage to steal a few horses.

After several hours of this phalanx type of warfare the Indians drew off, took up places along the route of march, sat down and watched. They made no immediate attempt to gather up their dead and wounded.

Just before sundown the volunteers bivouacked. They had five wounded, no slain, and very little water. However, their position wasn't enviable, although they had won the day. They were still a long way from the Umatilla River, had no firewood with which to cook an evening meal and were surrounded by a horde of angry Indians.

On the 25th, some supposedly neutral Cayuses approached the soldiers, making peace signs. From these, Gilliam, Lee and the Commissioners, learnt that the Cayuses were sharply divided among themselves. Most of them wanted to make peace. The die-hards, mostly young warriors who hadn't yet counted a *coup*, wanted to continue the fight. These were in the minority and Gilliam was assured that, if he would stop marching and offer to parley, the Cayuses would be agreeable.

The settlers and animals had been a long time without water. Gilliam's decision was to press on to the river; afterwards he would think about treating with Indians.

On the 26th, after crossing the Umatilla and loading up on water, Gilliam still refused to stop. When Stickas and several other headmen rode over to council, Colonel Gilliam kept right on going in the direction of Walla Walla. The Indians became incensed anew. Gilliam made it plain that he

meant to push through the Indian country and destroy any Indians he could compel to fight him.

On the morning of the 27th, when the command resumed its march, there wasn't an Indian in sight. The Army reached Walla Walla without meeting any Indians and bivouacked in the country ruled by Walla Walla Chieftain Peupeumoxmox, who was quite amiable as it behoved him to be.

Satisfied that no danger existed in the Walla Walla area, Colonel Gilliam led out for Waiilatpu and upon arriving there made a personal and detailed inspection of the ghostly wreckage. Always grim and short-tempered, Gilliam was aroused at what he found.

The buildings had been burned; the orchards needlessly chopped down. Corpses, which had been rooted out of shallow graves by wolves and coyotes, were scattered in grisly disarray. Soldiers were ordered to prepare a common grave—deep, this time—for the bodies. They were reinterred.

There was nothing left of the mission which could be used as a fort, so Gilliam set his men to building one. The men grumbled. They'd signed up to fight Indians. If they were going to build things they might just as well go home, for their homesteads needed things built, too. Gilliam said he'd name the fort for Volunteer Lieutenant Colonel James Waters and, furthermore, if the men wanted a fight he'd lead them out on the sixth of March to see if he couldn't find them one.

But the Commissioners blocked that idea when they sent Will Craig and Joseph Gervais to look for Indians, which were found and turned out to be Nez Percés, friendly and highly thought of, even by Gilliam.

When the Nez Percés came into camp the volunteers cheered them. There was a little banter, a lot of laughter, then Chief Joseph—whose mother was a Cayuse—said he could speak for his own people and those of the Cayuses who were with them. Joseph's half-brother, incidentally, was Five Crows.

Colonel Gilliam sat through the ensuing talks and kept a dour eye upon the Cayuses present. He had suspicions about treachery. Shortly before the council broke up, General Joel

Palmer presented Joseph's people with tobacco and a large American flag, obtained their renewed promises not to molest white people and sat cross-legged in the evening while the Nez Percés entertained him with a thrilling war dance.

So far, so good. Everyone, with the possible exception of the Colonel, was satisfied. To the volunteers it appeared that the end of the campaign was near. That meant a return to families and harvests.

Then General Palmer asked the Nez Percés to find the Cayuses and tell them they must surrender the Whitman killers. To lend substance to this demand, Palmer proposed that the Army should march one day's travel behind the Indian allies. This was agreed upon and both parties got under way. It still looked as though the campaign was about to end. One more march.

But, bearing out Gilliam's dark prophecies, and before the Army even got close to the Cayuse encampment, Chief Stickas came up with cattle, money and personal affects taken from Waiilatpu and from whites in general. A spy had carried Palmer's ultimatum to the hostiles. Gilliam reiterated his suspicions of Cayuse treachery. Stickas asked that the Army stop where it was and hold a council. Gilliam wanted to forge ahead and force a fight but the Commissioners demurred.

Captain English with forty volunteers was sent back to Waiilatpu with the recovered cattle. Gilliam's command was deprived of that many guns.

At the council, Stickas said his people would not agree to a surrender of the fugitives and named them as sub-chieftains Tawatowe and Tamsucky, among others. He then suggested some kind of an alternative be worked out. There was a general discussion in which Colonel Gilliam said he would not settle for less than the murderers and he wanted the half-breed Joe Lewis as well. The council hung up on this *impasse* and, on the 11th of March, the Commissioners started for Oregon City to get additional instructions. Gilliams was left upon his own.

He struck camp and started for the Cayuse village. This

occasioned another ruse on the part of the Indians. They brought to Gilliam some horses they had captured from his loose-stock herd when he'd had the running fight with them before reaching the Umatilla.

They also came up in solemn pomp carrying a large American flag (probably stolen from the Nez Percés). Gilliam forged ahead. Next, the Indians sent messengers to Gilliam saying that Stickas had apprehended Joe Lewis but that Lewis had been rescued by friends. If Gilliam would stop where he was and give Stickas a little more time, he'd bring the renegade to him. Gilliam kept right on marching.

Near the head of Touchet (Touché) creek, Towatowe sent word to Gilliam that he was going to abandon the hostile element of his people and meet Gilliam on Tucannon (Two Cannon) creek. Further, that Gilliam was wasting his time searching for the other culprits, that Tamsucky had fled to the Nez Percé country and Tilaukit had canoed down the Tucannon to the Snake River, fleeing toward the Palouse country.

Gilliam considered. Towatowe's message had a ring of truth to it. If it was right, at least in part, he might catch Tilaukit, known chieftain of the hostile element. Moreover, if Tilaukit had just started, there was an excellent chance he might be intercepted at the Tucannon.

A forced march was made by night. The Cayuse camp on the banks of the Tucannon was invested just before dawn. Gilliam had about one hundred and sixty men still with him. The camp was all but deserted. There were a few warriors around, armed and daubed for war but manifesting no desire to fight. In fact it is chronicled that they grinned at the haggard volunteers. An old man told Gilliam that Tilaukit had left the camp only a short time before, driving some cattle ahead of him. In the distance the soldiers could see livestock upon a sidehill. The old Indian said they belonged to Tilaukit; some he had left behind; that the soldiers might as well have them.

Gilliam sent men to round up the animals and from an eminence the volunteers saw someone had driven a few head

of cattle across the Snake, probably as a shield. There wasn't much doubt as to who the fleeing warrior would be.

But Gilliam's men and horses were exhausted. To subject them to an additional chase against a fresh Indian on a strong horse would be senseless. There then remained but one thing to do and Gilliam did it; he rounded up the horses and cattle grazing near the village and began the tedious march back to his camp on the Touchet.

He had gone only slightly more than a mile when all hell broke loose. Four hundred screaming Palouse Indians struck his column. Gilliam dared not stop lest he be surrounded, pinned down and butchered. He pushed on. The loose-stock provided protection of sorts while the volunteers made a running fight against the Cayuse's allies.

Neither men nor horses had had any rest in over twenty-four hours of constant movement. They kept up their running fight as long as was humanly possible but by evening were reeling with fatigue. Gilliam called a halt near a flowing creek. The men slid from their saddles. The captured livestock was employed very effectively here as a bulwark against the Palouses who rode round and round the command, pouring in a blanketing fire of arrows and musket balls.

Just before sundown the Indians drew off, re-formed, and attacked *en masse*. The settlers stampeded the livestock into them and broke the charge. After nightfall the Indians withdrew as was their custom, and the volunteers remained the balance of the night hours beside the creek.

Before dawn, Gilliam had his men mounted and on the move again. The terrain was hilly-to-mountainous, ideal for the Indians' favourite strategem of ambushing. Wily Gilliam led his men to the crests and ridges in order to be able to see in all directions at once. Outwitted, the Palouses tried another *en masse* attack. This was repulsed by the volunteers who dismounted to fire a withering fusillade. When the hostiles broke that time, the volunteers cheered and called upon them to attack like that again.

Approaching the Touchet, both adversaries appreciated

the tactical importance of a heavily forested spit of land near the ford. Whichever side could get into the trees could flank the other side and prevent a successful crossing. Gilliam despatched twenty men under Captain Shaw. The Indians detached a slightly larger force. Shaw's men raced directly toward the ford. The Palouses emulated their example. When both parties were straining into the race Captain Shaw slowed enough to enable his men to complete a manoeuvre without disaster and veered directly toward the hostiles. Thrown into confusion, fighting to swerve their horses, the Palouses scattered out. Shaw then turned toward the trees and led his men in a charge directly toward them. By the time the Indians recovered and rode in close they could see shadowy figures waiting. When the balance of the command came up, the Indians fell back and let them cross without attempting to renew the fight.

Thus Gilliam's running fight ended at the ford. His command finally arrived back at Waiilatpu thoroughly exhausted. Their entire bill of fare for the three day engagement with the Palouses had been a colt. Their casualties were ten wounded, one of whom died shortly after arriving at Waiilatpu.

After a brief rest, stock was taken and supplies were found to be so low they had to be replenished immediately. Colonel Gilliam accordingly took two companies and struck out. The men left behind were apportioned additional powder and shot to last until the colonel's return—which would be never.

While bivouacked at a sweet-water spring beyond the Umatilla Cornelius Gilliam was bending over pulling a horse halter loose from a snarl of gear, carelessly thrown down, when a part of the halter engaged the hammer of a loaded musket, pulled it back then slipped off it. The resultant explosion killed Gilliam instantly.

Major Henry Lee and Captain Tom McKay took Gilliam's remains home. Subsequently Governor Abernathy appointed Lee colonel of volunteers over Lieutenant Colonel Waters' head. Lee later resigned the commission in the interests of harmony but before he shed the epaulettes the United States

ship *Anita* sailed up the Columbia on the 16th of March with a recruiting officer aboard seeking volunteers for the Mexican War.

The recruiter was given an emphatic and articulate briefing on conditions in the Oregon country and left to his own devices. Governor Abernathy issued an appeal for three hundred additional volunteers to be used against hostile Indians, and sent Colonel Henry Lee to Portland to muster-in those who showed up.

Southerly, a Captain Maxon, commandant at The Dalles, took a wagon train back to Waiilatpu with provisions for the men there, and found them faring comfortably.

Meanwhile, during the lull in the campaign, things happened in Indiandom. While Colonel Lee was marching toward Waiilatpu with his recruits from Portland, he received a message from some friendly Indians saying that Towatowe, Stickas, Otter-Skin-Shirt, and Camaspelo, had returned to the Umatilla country with their families, horses and cattle.

The Nez Percés were mourning the loss of their chieftain, Ellis, who, with about fifty of his people had contracted measles while hunting in the buffalo country and had perished from the disease.

The Nez Percés went to Waiilatpu about a hundred strong and wanted Henry Lee, whom they thought was still there, to help them appoint another chieftain. When this information was taken to Lee he left the command and hastened ahead; met the Nez Percés; had a big feast and council with them; suggested the prominent spokesman Richard (who had been to the East with Marcus Whitman and knew the numbers and strength of the whites) as chieftain, and, for war-leader, recommended Meeway, a peacefully-inclined, jolly warrior. The Nez Percés accepted Lee's suggestions, confirmed both Richard and Meeway in their new positions and departed. They later assassinated Richard.

Moccasin telegraph carried news of Henry Lee's presence at Waiilatpu. Some Walla Wallas under Peupumoxmox came down for a parley. Even some Cayuses showed up, always

insisting they belonged to bands which were friendly and disavowing sympathy for their hostile kinsmen. Peupeumoxmox was again daubed and armed for war but smiling, talking of peace. The Cayuses were grave and worried. Lee told them he did not want peace, he wanted reparations and the Whitman murderers; that he would stay in the Indians' country until he got both. To the Cayuses this meant they would have to divide their time between guarding and harvesting. During the summer months they normally jerked meat, dried berries and otherwise prepared for winter. White hostility would hamper them greatly in this. The volunteers had out-fought them without humbling them; now it appeared they meant to harrass them during harvest time and that could mean starvation in the winter to come. They had cause to be worried.

Just when it appeared that the Oregonians had the situation well in hand, occurred one of those colossal blunders which happened so frequently in the old west. While the military had been prosecuting the Cayuse War vigorously and tactfully by fighting only hostile Indians, appeasing and mollifying the neutrals, the officials of Oregon Territory passed an ordinance which prohibited the sale or trade of guns and ammunition to *all* Indians.

Peupeumoxmox reacted violently to this by declaring his intention of joining the hostiles. Other neutrals were equally as indignant. Why, they asked, penalise all Indians, for the crimes of a few? Why deprive every tribe of the means to hunt and protect themselves simply because a few renegades refused to give ~~themselves~~ themselves up, or be given up, by their associates?

By the time the ordinance was rescinded the natives were deeply troubled and suspicious. Even the consummate diplomacy of Henry Lee was taxed to the limit to prevent a general uprising, but in time the excitement died down.

Perversely, though, the neutrals were impressed with one thing: the whites *could* deprive those who opposed them of the means to survive. This probably bolstered the friendlies in their

conviction that the winning side would be the American side; few later defected.

After the last council, the Cayuses returned to their forests and Henry Lee, in a moment of respite, examined the command which remained at Waiilatpu—or Fort Waters, as it was now commonly called.

The occupation forces left over from Gilliam's command had found a cache of grain, reactivated the mission's old mill and ground it. They had also jerked a lot of meat in preparation for the winter campaign they thought might lie ahead.

Colonel Waters was very friendly, which troubled Lee's conscience. He resigned his Colonel's commission in favour of Waters with the hearty approval of the settlers-in-arms who insisted he be appointed Lieutenant Colonel. Waters concurred and Lee accepted. With that, the last minor obstacle to resuming the field was eliminated and, on the 17th of May, 1848, Colonel Waters, Lieutenant Colonel Henry A. G. Lee, and four hundred volunteers left Waiilatpu to search for the shadowy hostiles. Their strategy was simply to find the dissidents and force a battle; in short, to end the Cayuse War.

The first Indians they ran across were friendlies, sullen and uncommunicative over the ban on guns and shot. Difficulty was encountered in every village and camp except those of the staunchly loyal Nez Percés, who offered to help the volunteers hunt down Tilaukit and those thought to be with him, of indeterminate number, but believed to be exclusively the bucks who had participated in the Whitman Massacre.

The Army made haste slowly, delicately, feeling its way through a veritable pall of dissatisfaction, taking great pains not to do or say anything which might further alienate the grumbling neutrals. Lee was privately piqued. It was like trying to walk on eggs without breaking any.

May and June were harvest months for the settler-volunteers as well as for the Indians. The soldiers had crops at home to look after if they weren't to join the natives in a winter of

famine. Accordingly the volunteers sought to have the campaign brought to a speedy conclusion.

No one particularly wanted the thing to drag on through the summer but the country was large, the hostiles fleet, elusive, always amply warned. To top it off, there were isolated parties of whites who were clamouring to be rescued and escorted to places of safety. The Army could seek hostiles, placate neutrals, patrol settlements, seek out and move to safety those thought to be in peril. It couldn't do all those things at the same time and retain any fighting strength at all. Henry Lee and Colonel Waters decided, wisely, that for the time being the fugitives would have to be left free. It was more important to remove settlers, their livestock and families, than to hunt Indians, leaving settlers to become additional sacrifices, causes for more fighting later on.

As they forged deeper into Indian country they found quite a lot of Tilaukit's livestock. Every animal known to belong to hostiles was rounded up, consigned to the care of the Nez Percé allies and sent back to Waiilatpu. This would injure the hostiles in two ways. The loss of horses would set them afoot. The loss of cattle would cut down their winter reserves of food.

A detachment was sent to Lapwai to succour whites there, including Indian Agent Craig and family, who not only felt unsafe but *were* unsafe. At Tshimakain, another group of whites was escorted from Little Fort Colville where they had fortified up expecting the worst and who had been bored to distraction when nothing happened.

The commander's various detached contingents eventually accomplished their several assignments and made rendezvous at Waiilatpu. They hadn't accomplished their original purpose of fighting hostiles but they had successfully mitigated circumstances which would have in all probability caused more bloodshed and ill will later on.

At Waiilatpu, Henry Lee watched the gradual disintegration of the Army, with concern. Knowing that, in Indian eyes, the volunteers had failed, and hoping to hold at least a nucleus,

Lee made a strong plea to those among the dwindling troops who had no farms or families, asking them to continue in service until the 15th of September, by which time the harvests should be completed and settlers willing to sign up for a winter campaign. Lee also promised to try and obtain more settlers who would take up land in the hostile country, thus creating a buffer zone between the settlements and the Indian country. This would offer a launching area for strikes against any natives who became troublesome.

Fifty men agreed to stay. Most of the others, in a rush to get home, took French-leave without bothering to get either discharge papers or back pay, action reminiscent of many an earlier desertion during the Revolutionary War.

The first campaign against the Cayuses and their allies was ended. It might be called a draw; it certainly wasn't a victory. The volunteers who stayed at Waiilatpu put aside their weapons, planted corn, hunted for more caches of which they found several, retained a large supply of confiscated Indian cattle and horses, then settled down to enjoy the Fall of 1848.

The emigrant trains continued to roll westward; among the passengers were many prospective Indian fighters. All the natives acquired in the way of reinforcements was a summer crop of babies none of which would be able to shoulder a musket or draw a bow for decades. The shadow of conquest was dark and lengthening.

The fugitive hostiles spent the Fall in the high country hunting and fishing, while all Indians returned to the bow in raids and hunts, hoarding powder, shot, and their guns, for although the order prohibiting the sale of ammunition and arms to Indians had been rescinded, the fear of it lingered.

Then, in March, 1849, Territorial Governor Joe Lane received word that a long-sought regiment of United States Regulars was *en route* to the Northwest. It was made up of veterans of the Mexican War, hardy men for the most part, experienced Indian fighters. Excitement and relief, spread throughout the country-side. Then, when the soldiers arrived,

it was sanguinarily discovered that no one had thought to make any preparations for them. Settler-soldiers simply returned home when the fighting was over. The Regulars had no homes in Oregon. Besides that, they were bone-weary from many skirmishes with Plains Indians, and reduced from illnesses. They were subsequently sent to Oregon City and quartered there for the winter.

Then the Gold Rush started and Oregon lost not only a considerable proportion of its eligible males, but the regiment of Regulars had enough desertions to make advisable the moving of them farther from the areas of temptation. While what remained of the force was hastily marched to Vancouver where barracks had been erected, their commanding officer, Colonel Loring, went after the deserters—numbering in excess of one hundred.

At the Rogue River in Southern Oregon the gold-struck soldiers, travelling in a large body, were challenged by Rogue River tribesmen. The Indians refused to sanction the crossing of the river by so many soldiers. There was a sharp fight and eventually about forty deserters crossed the river, scattering the hostiles. Loring later came across a camp of these men at the base of the Siskiyou. The snow had done what the Indians had failed to do: stopped the soldiers in their tracks. Loring rounded up all the deserters he could find and herded them northward toward Vancouver.

In the dark places of the forests, meanwhile, the stigma attached to all Indians by the continuation among them of the warriors who had participated in the attack upon the Whitman's mission made the unimplicated grumble. They had heard that Regulars had arrived; settlers would have nothing to do with them; trade had dwindled to a trickle; parties of whites harrassed them constantly and their harvests had been repeatedly interrupted by the need to flee, to hide. And if all this wasn't enough, the actual killers fell into disagreement among themselves, further splitting up the tribesmen over who, exactly, was responsible for the Waiilatpu massacre.

Tilaukit, thin from running, stripped of most of his wordly

goods and tired, then decided that the five most notorious killers should give themselves up and shoulder all the blame. Naturally the other fugitives were not in accord with this but, when news of brushes with Regulars filtered back, most of the tribesmen insisted that Tilaukit's plan be adopted. It was painfully obvious that the whites were determined to apprehend the wanted men; time, if anything, only seemed to make their determination the stronger.

It was then suggested to the fugitives that they might escape white-man retribution if they could secure good representation. To climax the dissention, as the harvest time ended for both sides in the Fall of 1849, settlers turned once more to what had become a favourite pastime with them, the searching for Whitman Massacre Indians.

As the natives were still far short of needed provender for the coming winter these posses continued to interrupt their gatherings and the Indians became more than ever irritated at a condition which the surrender of a half-dozen or so among them could remedy.

Governor Lane was surprised one late summer evening by news that the Whitman Massacre fugitives had surrendered to officials at The Dalles. He immediately set out for that place. The prisoners were Tsiachalkis, Quiamashouskin, Klokamas, Tilaukit, and Tamahas. In custody, the Indians immediately put out feelers for legal council by offering fifty good horses to any white-man-attorney who would represent them. Their bearing in captivity was anything but repentant. They were proud and reserved and, when asked why they had surrendered, crafty old fox Tilaukit replied: ". . . Your missionaries teach us that Christ died to save his people. Thus we die, to save our people".

But Tamahas' daughter, wife of Yellow Serpent (or Yellow Bull) of the Nez Percés, told a white friend the reason the bucks had given themselves up was because of discord among all Indians over continuing to harbour them.

The prisoners were taken to Oregon City—population about one thousand; at that time Oregon's largest town—

and were confined on an island in the river which was then heavily guarded. A jury was chosen to hear the case against them and it is to the credit of the authorities that they refused to sanction the sitting of any of the old timers upon the jury. When the trial opened, defence did the best it could with what it had, which was very little. First, it raised the ubiquitous question of legality, contending that, since the laws of the United States had not governed Oregon Territory when the crimes were committed, the criminals could not now be tried by them. The second salvo by defence was just as plausible. It stated there had been circumstances in existence prior to the murders, of sufficient inducement to the Indian mind, to make murder justifiable. This was in reference to the rumour of poisoning, of course; half-blood Joe Lewis's exaggeration of eventual extermination.

Then the prosecution failed to show evidence of participation against Quiamashouskin. It failed, also, except in the most sketchy way, to show that the others were implicated, Tamahas and Tilaukit possibly excepted. Notwithstanding, the jury returned a verdict of guilty and the culprits were sentenced to be executed upon the 3rd of June, 1849. The method of extinction was to be hanging. This brought an immediate and violent protest from the Indians; not just the condemned men but all Indians. The prospect of death didn't worry them but the method by which it was to be achieved, did. To be hanged was particularly odious to Indians.

When the date of execution arrived, mountain man Joe Meek (whose illegitimate daughter, Lily Mars, perished as a result of the ~~Whitman~~ Massacre), arrived to officiate as executioner. Joe, bushy-bearded, with snapping black eyes and elastic morals, was first lawman of Oregon Territory. He had his tomahawk along. Quiamashouskin asked Meek, in Chinook, if he could be stabbed to death instead of hanged saying it was a more fitting end for a warrior. Joe didn't answer. The Indian repeated his request. Then Joe argued with him while all the condemned men were being arranged upon the gibbet. When the signal to launch the murderers into eternity was

given, Meek, with one blow of his hatchet, severed the rope which secured the trapdoor. Quiamashouskin dropped through with the others.

The results of the execution were significant. Tilaukit's band of Cayuses lost their leader, their most aggressive warrior clique, a world of prestige; also a great many horses and cattle, taken by whites at every opportunity, during the so-called war and afterwards. They subsequently moved to the Umatilla country where other bands of Cayuses dwelt, taking with them their deep-seated antipathy toward all whites and their bitterest of memories. The execution of their leaders should have ended the Whitman Massacre affair, but it didn't. The Cayuse War could have been considered terminated, its cause avenged, but actually the end of the Cayuse War was notable only because the second phase of the Northwest Conquest was completed.

About this time, too, the emigrants brought something far more serious than the measles of earlier times. It was cholera. Before it had worked itself out it had killed many settlers and Indians and had also caused a resurrection of the old rumour of poisoning, of eventual extinction for Indians. Also, another spectre from earlier times cropped up again: the question of land ownership.

The Boundary Commission had settled the question of contiguous possessions in 1846, but, so mistrusted was this mythical line, that settlers bought title to their lands from the Hudson's Bay Company as well as from the United States Government. This afforded double assurance of ownership regardless of whomsoever it turned out might have best claim to the Territory. The uncertainty even extended to the American Army, which bought land for Loring's barracks at Vancouver from the British and, also, leased from Britain the land where Fort Steilacoom stood.

The English were just as confused. They traded and did business well within the 49th Parallel, under the Union Jack. Of those who felt the least concern in this instance, were the Indians who had long since come to place more faith in the

Company than in Americans. But with the advent of Loring's Regulars, the United States had taken its initial step in securing what was now legally its Northwest Territory. It could be expected that more troops would follow, and they did, a bewildering array of them: infantry, dragoons, even artillery. To clinch military occupation, General Persifor E. Smith, Commandant, Pacific Division, arrived in Oregon in September, in company with Chief Quartermaster D. D. Vinton.

The purpose of this visit was to select sites for the establishment of military posts. Jointly, Smith and Vinton approved of and adopted most of the existing installations and more or less permanent camps which had been founded by the settler-volunteers. Yet, when called upon to erect a fortress near the California Road, they demurred. The possibility of wholesale desertion again made them wary.

A flurry of excitement was then occasioned when Catholic priests were found to have arms and were said secretly to be supplying Indians with them. The priests denied supplying Indians with guns and said they had guns for the same reasons settlers had them: self-protection. They also stated they had no intention of seeing their convert-Indians butchered by heathen-Indians. Converts were an investment, especially when secured at such costs in patience; Chinook wasn't the simplest language in the world.

This storm, like others, passed in time. In its place came a very agreeable piece of business. The United States Congress voted one hundred thousand dollars as reimbursement for the costs of the Cayuse War, which until that time still lay as an indebtedness incurred by individual citizens of the Territory.

So it went: first an outrage, then an accusation, then a reward, or something else just as bewildering and, all the while, the Northwest was struggling with growing pains, trying mightily to come of age. Statehood was petitioned for and knocked on the head by Southerners in Washington who were beginning to feel the waves of Northern—and Western—

antagonism over their "peculiar institution": a thing called slavery.

The Army got everyone mad at it. After the volunteers had skunked the Cayuses, whipped and scattered all hostiles who wanted to fight, the Army arrived and flexed its muscles, something which understandably did not set too well with settlers who had done the actual fighting.

As more and more troops arrived there had to be places for them. In May of 1850, Major Tucker went to The Dalles with two companies of riflemen, carrying orders to establish an outpost. Tucker declared an area ten miles square as a Military Reservation. Within that ten miles were settlers, their farms and ranges. They would of course be obliged to move.

Northward, at Vancouver, the Army decreed their Reservation to be four miles square. Southward, at old Astoria, the Army arbitrarily included still more settler-land within the post's perimeter. Settler wrath became articulate.

Colonel Loring then attempted to have the famous Luelling orchards at Milwaukie set aside as an arsenal compound. Henderson Luelling had brought about seven hundred fruit tree slips across the plains in wagons. At incalculable labour and risk these slips had been planted in soil spread inside wagons and tended constantly by Luelling. Despite incredible hardships they had come through to Oregon intact and had been planted there. Luelling's orchards were the pride and boast of all Oregon. When Loring included them within his projected military reservation the settlers arose in fury and went so far as to send petitions to Congress signed with hundreds of names asking for the withdrawal of U.S. troops from the Territory. They said they had looked out for themselves for years, had whipped whomsoever needed whipping and had thought that, since Oregon was now part of the Union, the soldiers would be a blessing. Instead they had turned out to be a curse. They "Did more harm than Indians ever had so, please Congress, take back your soldiers and we'll continue to fight our own wars."

In the military bosom this did nothing to inspire warmth

toward settlers, especially when censure came down the line of command to the commanders in Oregon. A mutual and cynical regard was born which was to last, more or less, until the last gun was fired in the conquest of the Oregon country, between Regulars and settlers.

Then the American Congress, in 1850, negated all Indian claims to land west of the Cascades and appointed Anson Dart to be Superintendent of Indian Affairs. Dart appointed a relative, P. C. Dart, as his secretary. Joe Lane had been succeeded as governor by John P. Gaines, who was also to act as Peace Commissioner, in consort with several others. Gaines' job was specifically to grease the skids under land claims by all Indians west of the Cascades in compliance with Federal directives.

Things moved along slowly until Spring. In April, 1851, Dart and Gaines received word that Congress had abolished all peace commissions, transferring their duties to Superintendents of Indian Affairs. This suited Gaines who was very busy as governor, but Anson Dart, down to his last three hundred dollars, felt that he had accomplished quite a little and was not pleased at all. In June, 1851, Dart went east of the Cascades and came across Tilaukit's old band of Cayuses. They had degenerated to such an extent that the most they could muster by way of warriors was thirty-six men.

After a prolonged journey throughout the Territory, Dart observed that the Indians appeared quite harmless and were more or less reconciled to white domination, with the exception of the Snakes to the north and east, and the Rogues down south, not far above the California line. These latter had fattened up considerably upon emigrant trains going into, and out of, the gold fields. They had modern arms, large herds of horses and cattle, contempt for whites and a tribal buckler of arrogance. The Snakes were not different, except that their affluence had come from raiding trains coming overland across the plains. Their depredations were not usually within the boundaries of the Oregon country anyway.

Dart discouraged the Nez Percés from launching a war

against the Snakes, which was a mistake, telling them that United States Regulars would be stationed in Snake country by 1852. If they were not he would withdraw objections to the proposed war. This was acceded to by the Nez Percés, and the Snakes launched an all-out war in late 1851, carrying the hatchet and torch to every white they could find.

Oregon's inland Indians were quiescent but northward and southward things were rapidly getting out of hand. This posed the age-old problem of fighting a two-front war in Oregon, at opposite ends of the Territory. Along with the headaches of supply, of commands weakened by reason of splitting up one strong command to conduct campaigns hundreds of miles apart, there was the additional worry over the Indians in mid-Oregon. There was no assurance they, also, would not take up the hatchet at a time when the divided commands would be too far away to help.

Regardless of dilemmas, however, some action had to be taken to stop the depredations, for, aside from the Snakes, southerly Indians such as the Rogue Rivers, Shastas, Modocs, Klamath Rivers and allied bands, were rendering the California Road just about impassable.

In May, 1851, David Dilley was killed in cold blood by two Rogue Rivers. His companions escaped, fled back over the Siskiyou and spread an alarm among California miners who formed a posse and hastened after the slayers. They succeeded in skirmishing with a few Rogues, killed two outright and captured several. These hostages were taken back to California. Later, the miners sent word, to the chieftain of the band involved, that the prisoners would be held until Dilley's murderers were surrendered. The chieftain scorned even to reply.

A few weeks later, Indians set up an ambush at a popular ford of the Rogue River. The first travellers who approached were fired upon too soon, were unharmed and in returning the fire managed to kill one Indian. The following day the Indians lay in wait at the same spot and attacked three separate parties of travellers, killing four people in one party.

The southern tribesmen spread out, raided throughout the valleys on both sides of the California-Oregon line, killing, plundering, stealing and making life impossible for settlers. An interlude of good fortune came in the guise of Mounted Rifles heading southward under the command of Major Kearny, whose ultimate destination was Missouri.

Someone told Kearny that the marauding redskins were assembling at Table Rock (near present day Medford), preparatory to launching either one big raid or a series of individual raids designed to wipe out the settlers.

Kearny had trouble crossing the Rogue River—the water was unusually high for June—but on the 17th he was well within sight of Table Rock. He was riding ahead of the main column with a party of twenty-eight men. Indian mounted videttes scouted him, at sight of which he pressed forward to force battle. The scouts fell back, sent word to the main camp of Kearny's approach and, a little later, the hostiles rode down to meet the soldiers.

There was no plan to the battle that followed. Soldiers charged when led, otherwise stood fast and fought from standing positions, firing repeatedly at the warriors who dashed round and round them until, horses exhausted, they withdrew, taking their casualties with them. This, however, was not before Kearny was able to verify the native kill at eleven, with an estimated number of wounded amounting to another eleven. His own losses were three wounded, of whom Captain Stuart died shortly after the last Indian was out of sight.

The route of the withdrawing hostiles was toward Table Rock. To storm up the nearly vertical sides of Table Rock would be suicidal. Kearny bivouacked and awaited the arrival of the balance of his command.

News of the seriousness of conditions in the Rogue River country had been carried inland and northward by settlers fleeing the area in search of safety. In time, Governor Gaines wrote President Fillmore apprizing him of the critical state of near-seige Oregon was in. Then the governor set out to see for himself and, in the Umpqua Valley, found that a

large portion of armed settlers had gone over to the Table Rock territory to aid in the fighting there.

Joe Lane, Territorial Delegate to Congress, was drum-thumping for additional recruits. Jesse Applegate met a band of miners going southward toward California and induced thirty of them to go with him to Willow Springs, which would be on the route of the Indians if they were dislodged and driven back. Eventually Joe Lane, G. W. T'Vault, and Levi Scott met up with Major Kearny's force and, on the 23rd of June, the hostiles were caught at the base of Table Rock and attacked with great vigour.

The Indians were routed and went streaming back up the buck-runs where the balance of their people were; later on, in the afternoon, they came pouring down in battle array to fight the combined commands of whites. The battle which followed was altogether different from earlier engagements. The hostiles had received reinforcements in large numbers. They were all well mounted and armed, eager to close and disposed to fight a pitched battle. Kearny had his own command plus forty-odd men who had ridden up with Joe Lane. There was, also quite a number of local settlers.

From the base of the rock the Indians launched a furious attack *en masse*. This was repulsed and a counter-charge was pressed with determination and ferocity. The hostiles were compelled to go over onto the defensive and stay there until early evening, when they finally broke and fled toward Sardine Creek, a portion of settlers having flanked them, athwart the trails back to Table Rock. No pursuit was considered advisable until dawn of the 25th, when the hostiles, overtaken not far from Gold Hill, promptly abandoned their women and children and scattered in every direction.

For two days, the 26th and 27th, Major Kearny tried to corner bands of hostiles and force them to stand and fight. He was unsuccessful except for minor skirmishes and returned to camp on the little creek, named for Captain Stuart, where the captives were being held. No whites had been killed although fifteen were wounded, ten of the latter being among

the Regulars. Total Indian casualties were—and are—unknown.

While at the bivouac, Joe Lane was accosted by a hostile from the nearby brush. The Indian said people were tired of fighting and wanted peace; that they had been continually molested by the whites who had broken all their treaties with the Indians. Lane replied that Indians, not the whites, had broken the treaties. Since the Indians wanted to fight they would now get all the fighting they desired. The Indian repeated that his people were tired of warfare and sought peace.

In the course of additional haggling, Major Kearny insisted he had to be on his way. He had already departed when Governor Gaines showed up, so the governor failed to meet him. At the last moment, Lane had talked Kearny out of taking the captives with him, saying that if this was done the Indians would continue to fight. Kearny left the prisoners, which Lane sent to Oregon City. The governor then sent a spokesman among the Indians with the request that they come in for a council.

Representatives of the Rogues met with Gaines and enumerated their grievances, sought clemency, and begged to have their women and children returned to them. Gaines sympathized with the troubled natives, extracted promises from them that they would not molest settlers, released the hostages and closed the council.

The Indians straggled southward, pilfering as they went. Gaines returned to Oregon City and appointed an agent for the Rogues. With the agent he sent back a token force of volunteer-soldiers.

A great many settlers were not in accord with Gaines' humanitarian policy. From personal experience they knew that Indians made peace only when they were not capable of making war. Settlements kept their vigilante groups armed and ready.

When the Rogues made rendezvous they were more restless than ever. A great many of them went south into California

where they joined with the Modocs, Shastas, and Klamaths, in depredations against settlers and miners working or living in isolated places, and in general continued their unrelenting war against all whites.

As atrocities mounted, it became clear the Rogues had not entered into their treaty with Governor Gaines with any intention of abiding by it. It also became clear that the Rogues were now working in alliance with other tribesmen, inciting to warfare and massacre all who would listen. Later, it would be known Rogues went up the Oregon coast as well as down it into California. Fortunately however, there were Indians up north hostile to the Rogues so, for the most part, their knack for stirring up trouble was centred southward.

The whites, finding continued harassment intolerable, resorted to punitive measures without benefit of military assistance or know-how. Some of their expeditions were grisly enough to shame even an Indian. They asked for, and gave, no mercy. Indians were exterminated like predatory animals. No distinctions were made as to tribe, age, sex, or sympathies. When found, Indian encampments were totally obliterated, brush shelters burnt, the slain and wounded thrown into the fires.

This was in retaliation; it was not claimed that civilized rules were adhered to. The expeditions were bent upon extermination, simply and solely. Neither side wanted prisoners. Both sides were concerned only with eventual supremacy and were convinced it could be attained only through the ruthless and utter elimination of the other side.

In short, warfare based upon the most primitive standards was now to rage, had raged, for some time. Yet, so vast was the country, so still and silent its reaches, forests and hidden valleys, that many a warrior fell who has yet to be discovered; many another would fall before the blood-bath was over.

CHAPTER THREE

Bloody Oregon

THE Hudson's Bay Company's power and prestige were waning. The fur trade was gone. Commerce was tailored to white-man needs, i.e. axes, work-horse harness, chain, hand-tools, ploughs and harrows. There was a little money to be eked out by hunters who sold meat in the settlements, but this field was dominated by white hunters. The Indian had few outlets for his energy and none for his industry without competing with whites, for which he was fitted neither by training nor heritage.

This left robbery, an ancient prerogative of the warrior. Yet robbery was no longer looked upon as a right of individual conquest. Oregon had grown and the Northwest was filling up. Robbing after vanquishing or out-smarting a settler, miner or traveller, was now a felony punishable by imprisonment, and, in fact, more often by death.

Yet the Indian had no alternative. He was unsuited for most settlement trades. In time he would come to work on farms, as manual labour, but that was in the future, after he had been denied the free right of hunting and fishing and raiding for a living in his own country. By then the best blood would have been spilt, the fiercest spirits shot or hung.

To the Indian of the 1850s, robbery was not a crime. It was his purpose, in attacking whites, to acquire things needed and wanted. When the fur trade collapsed he was left with nothing to barter. By 1850, civilization had come over the mountains. It passed by the Indian, left him destitute, bewildered, invaded. He had nothing it wanted but his heartland. This was taken

up without consideration of his prior rights of ownership. The Indian wanted much that civilization had but there was only one way for him to get it: the natural way: the way he'd been acquiring things since the Year One.

To take from the possessors by force, by stealth, by murder, in any way that he could: in his own mind it was perfectly logical to do this for, unless a man could protect what he owned, he had no right of ownership. Nature had long since taught the Indian her cardinal rule: survival of the fittest.

So civilization swept up and over the Indian, shunted him into the background. It was too busy planting its feet in his country to be bothered with him, and he accepted this, reacted to it in the time-honoured way of all warrior races. He plundered to exist.

In 1851, a sea captain attempted to establish a colony on a little curve of land up the Oregon coast not far from the gold fields. It was his intention to open up an overland route to the fields over which supplies could be taken from the beach. This was a laudable undertaking except for the obstacles which were impossible to surmount. At any rate, he supplied his landing party, all males, with a variety of inexpensive firearms including a little iron cannon with four or five cannon balls. Then he sailed away for trade goods.

The Indians, who didn't want the colonists there, gathered to chase them away and made enough threatening gestures to inspire the crection of earthwork fortifications at a place since known as Battle Rock. After several inconclusive skirmishes, the natives were led in an assault upon the settlers by a big, shock-headed man who wore a bright red shirt.

The fortified-up whites fired their cannon when the Indians stormed their earthworks. The Indians were stunned. They either had not been apprized of, or failed to appreciate the propensities of, the iron monster. Seventeen of them were killed; the balance fled, ears ringing. Later, the colonists went out to examine the dead and to their astonishment found that the shock-headed man in the red shirt was a white man.

Eventually returning to the attack the Indians had a new

leader. They would not get too close and the fight became a prolonged seige during which both sides resorted to long-range sniping. In one of the exchanges, the Indians lost their second leader also. A truce was then called which resulted in a ten-day armistice during which the colonists slipped away, being almost out of shot and powder.

When the sea captain returned and found evidence of fighting, he assumed all hands were massacred and carried an embroidered story to that affect away with him, adding another tale of horror and bloodletting to the countless other stories then in circulation—about a third of which were authentic.

In August of the same year another party went to the same spot, then called Port Orford, made a camp, weren't attacked and decided to build the inland road to the gold fields. Twenty-two men under W. G. T'Vault pushed inland to select the route. By the 22nd of August, thirteen of the explorers were convinced that the plan was not feasible and returned to base camp. T'Vault and his remaining nine men forged ahead.

The country-side was just about impenetrable. Underbrush, immense forests, deadfalls and marshy ground were everywhere. In fact, the way became finally so difficult that, by early September, T'Vault and his ragged companions also decided the project was hopeless and turned back. They met some Indians whom they sought to retain as canocists, offering to pay the natives for taking them down the Coquille River. The Indians held a council apart from the explorers before they agreed.

On the 14th of September T'Vault and friends stepped ashore at base camp with their sizeable group of dark-visaged, silent Coquille Indians. Without warning the Indians then surrounded the white men and threw themselves upon those whose person bore firearms. The whites, caught unprepared, made strong resistance. The Coquilles had war-clubs, bows, arrows, spears, and knives, against the fists and guns of the invaders. The fight was so vicious that the whites lost heavily before they were able to disentangle themselves.

A survivor named Gilbert Rush, who had been partially scalped, along with T'Vault and several others, escaped after darkness. They made their way to Astoria and news of their harrowing experience spread. The Regulars at Astoria, with an imperfect notion of the country, correlated the story with a copy of Major Kearny's report of the action near the Rogue River, and decided to send Lieutenant Kautz with twenty men to Port Orford, believing Orford and the Rogue River were less than fifty miles apart. Kautz's presence was supposed to act as a deterrent upon Port Orford and Rogue River Indians. It did not.

Simultaneously, Anson Dart was *en route* southward to hold one of his perennial councils with Indians. His party arrived the exact day of the T'Vault "massacre", (as every unsuccessful fight with Indians was called), and of course couldn't treat with Indians who were obviously worked up to a fighting pitch. Dart languished, and in due time sent one of his sub-agents, J. L. Parrish—without an escort but in company with a local Indian—to the Coquilles. Parrish had the customary presents of tobacco and a flag. He managed to contact some of the hostiles and even induced a chieftain to visit his camp for a talk. Several other chieftains eventually came in. All the council amounted to was a unanimous decision by the natives not to become wards of the United States Government—whoever it was. They went back to the forest and Parrish returned to Port Orford.

Superintendent Dart, having failed in one instance, sought to succeed in another. Knowing the Rogue Rivers were bleeding the more southerly country dry, he sent them an invitation to meet him at Port Orford for a council. They didn't come; didn't dare enter the Coquille country because the two tribes were ancient and hereditary enemies. Dart interpreted his second failure to be open defiance by the Rogues. It seems no one bothered to seek a reason for the Rogue's reticence.

Then, because Dart had failed to make headway in the realm of peace, and also because tales of other atrocities began circulating in Astoria and similar settlements in the Coquille

country, General E. A. Hitchcock sent three companies of the First Dragoons to Port Orford. These implemented the Kautz contingent already there.

On the last day of October, 1851, Lieutenant Colonel Silas Casey led an expedition into the marshy Coquille country. Casey's guide was Gilbert Bush, head-bandaged and vengeance-seeking. They chopped brush and ducked limbs, fought their way past tangled creepers and sloshed through swamps until they got to the Coquille River. On the 5th of November, they found Indians awaiting them on the far bank. As soon as the command was visible the natives began cat-calling to them, daring them to cross over and fight. There was a little useless long-range duelling which caused no harm, then the soldiers started up the south bank of the river seeking a ford. The Indians paced them on the north bank, yelling and making uncomplimentary gestures.

This went on for several days, neither side coming any closer to the other, then Casey's men were faced with formidable mountains and twisting, undergrowth-choked canyons through which it was not only next to impossible to march, but through which it was also inadvisable to venture. It rained, also. Not politely but torrentially. The ground got soggy, trees and brush were drenched, and dumped water upon the harassed troopers as they blundered onwards. Rewards were insignificant. They found several villages which they demolished, but found no Indians to fight. In disgust Colonel Casey ordered a return to base camp. This was eventually accomplished, then Casey detailed sixty men in canoes to return up-river with him. This time he was more successful, although Indians met him on both banks and some awkward skirmishes were fought while the troops paddled along.

Casey set ten men ashore downstream with a view to flanking the excited natives whom he then diverted by engaging them in a fight from mid-river. When the flanker came up, fifteen Indians were killed near the uppermost village, and the rest scattered. The village was then destroyed and

Casey returned to Port Orford where several of his companies were detached, and sent to San Francisco by ship.

Later, Casey's second in command, Lieutenant Stanton, reinforced the outpost and named it Fort Orford. For almost half a year the soldiers clung to their fort with nothing to occupy them beyond the persistent attempts of the natives to make off with their supplies and equipment. Several feeble attempts were made to blaze a trail inland but the country was so hopeless, the Indians so implacable, that in time this was given up and Fort Orford, with twelve dragoons under Lieutenant Stanton, languished, all but forgotten.

The purpose in establishing Fort Orford was, of course, nullified by the inability of its garrison to do more than cling to their little curve of coast (called, among men stationed there, "Fort Castaway"). As the command shrank, punitive expeditions against hostiles became impossible. This naturally encouraged the Coquilles to commit depredations whenever opportunity offered. It also left the northern route open and undefended against raiding Rogues. These latter people killed and plundered to the very edge of Coquille country.

By early 1852 the Rogues were more obnoxious than ever. A settler from Wolf Creek—which emptied into the Rogue River—was plundered and killed. Nearby, in the same area, five more miners were attacked in Illinois Valley. Under cover of darkness one man slipped away. The others forted up and held off the Indians until a posse of thirty-five miners came racing up. The Indians scattered. Returning, the relief party found a mutilated corpse of a man killed after they had passed. He was unrecognizable and unidentifiable.

Farther south another miner, named Calvin Goodman, was caught by Shastas and tortured, robbed, and finally killed, on the 18th of April. Chief Scarface of the Shastas was marauding on both sides of the California-Oregon line, in league with, and reinforced by, the Rogues.

Lawlessness spread. Chief John of the Shasta bands living in Scott Valley, Northern California, was in the act of leading his tribesmen upon the war-trail when a contingent of aroused

miners descended upon his village and captured him. It was demanded of him that he prevail upon Scarface and Scarface's accessories in several murders, to come in and surrender. Chief John refused to do this, escaped, and both sides got ready to fight.

In the ensuing skirmishes—mostly from ambushes—the sheriff of Siskiyou County was wounded while leading a posse of settlers. Several of his men had horses shot from under them. The hostiles then faded into the mountainous, timbered country, and pursuit was impossible.

Elisha Steele, travelling overland from Yreka, arrived at the Johnson ranch in Scott Valley and found there a large body of angry white men, part of the group which had been balked in the attempt to re-capture Chief John. Steele, hoping to avert a general uprising, called for a council with local Indians, induced Chief Tolo, headman of the Yreka area Indians, and his son Chief Phillip, headman of the Scott Valley dissidents, to attend.

Success crowned Steele's efforts to the extent that neutral Indians were persuaded to aid him in apprehending Chief John and several others who were known to have taken part in several killings, notably the murder of Calvin Woodman. Steele went to Yreka and procured warrants of arrest for the wanted Indians, naming particularly Scarface of the Shastas and Chief Bill, the latter allegedly involved in several California murders.

Shortly after this, friendlies informed Steele that both the wanted men were in the village of Chief Sam, a notorious Rogue River Indian, who was avowedly at war with the whites and who could be expected to fight Steele's party on sight.

Chief Sam's two most grievous complaints against whites were, that they had pre-empted lands used by his tribe for winter quarters since time immemorial, and secondly, that one G. H. Ambrose, a settler, had affronted him inexcusably by stubbornly refusing to announce the engagement of his infant son to Sam's infant daughter, a frightful breach of etiquette.

Whether motivated by resentment over the betrothal incident, or by just plain prudence, Chiefs Tolo and Phillip at the last minute declined to accompany Elisha Steele's men to the Rogue River country. In their places they duly sent two strapping warriors, promising that the substitutes would either assist in capturing the fugitives or would stand trial in their stead.

While Steele was organizing his posse, Indian Agent to the Rogues, Alonzo Skinner, learnt of his intentions and sent word of impending trouble to nearby Jacksonville. Jacksonville responded by forming a volunteer group under Captain John Lamerick. Skinner was then informed the Jacksonville volunteers were stirring up trouble on their own and requested assurance from them that they would not do anything likely to precipitate more trouble until he'd had a chance to council with Chief Sam's people. This assurance was given and Skinner sent runners to the hostiles, asking them to come in.

Accordingly, Sam's band straggled in, held a council with Alonzo Skinner and other whites, and assured the settlers they wanted peace, but Sam refused to sign any pact with the whites until Chief Joe (namesake of Joe Lanc), could arrive. Chief Joe was headman for mixed bands in the Applegate country, fellow trouble-maker with Chief Sam, and enemy of all white people.

While the council was awaiting the arrival of Chief Joe, Elisha Steele arrived in Jacksonville with his Californians. Hearing of the council in progress, Steele insisted his demand for the apprehension of Scarface and others be included in the treaty thought to be upon the verge of completion.

At the second sitting of the council, Captain Lamerick, Agent Skinner, Elisha Steele, and the company from California, all attended. Upon seeing the Californians, Chief Sam became alarmed. He grew evasive and taciturn. Agent Skinner then asked the California men to put aside their arms, which was done with reluctance.

In the course of the ensuing conversations, it was intimated that the fugitives from California law were in Sam's

camp. Steele demanded their surrender. Chief Sam refused to comply, pointing out that Steele had captured and was still holding two Rogues he'd run across near Jacksonville. Steele then released the hostages, but it was Alonzo Skinner who told Chief Sam he had been instrumental in affecting their release. Piqued by this, Steele then told the former hostages that, if they left the council area, they would be shot. To give this threat substance, Steele instructed his Californians to take up their arms.

Of course, ²¹ of this was witnessed by Rogues who were watching the council from dozens of places of hiding. Interpreting the movement of the Californians towards their guns to mean assassination for Chief Sam, over a hundred Rogue warriors came out into the open, fully armed. Their sudden presence added considerably to the discomfort of everyone. The balance of the white men then also retrieved their arms and the council was deadlocked. This all occurred on the 19th of July, 1852.

Chief Sam's refusal to yield to Steele's demands further blighted the council; if there had been hope before, now there was none. Some of the whites tried to prevail upon Sam. They argued and coaxed for several hours. Finally, Sam, wearying of the farce, arose and said he would go to discuss what was demanded of him with his people. When he was a goodly distance off, Sam yelled back that he not only wouldn't give up his guests but that he wasn't going to return to the council. If the white men wanted him, they must come and get him!

The whites were still surrounded by Indians. They hesitated to do anything which any fool knew would precipitate a very costly fight. Agent Skinner felt he had to save face and consequently sent some Oregonians across the Rogue River in the direction of Sam's camp. He then personally led another group of Oregonians down the river, behind the mass of Rogue warriors.

This dividing of their forces alarmed Elisha Steele, who immediately deployed his Californians so as to cut off from the

river the Indians who still remained near the council area. By this time, some of Sam's people had crossed the river and others who had been hidden came out into the open to watch the white men. Steele, seeing their numbers, sent a friendly messenger to Skinner warning him against doing anything rash.

When Steele's messenger returned he said he had seen the wanted Indians slipping away southward. This caused a ripple of excitement among Steele's men, who began to fan out as though to cross the river and pursue the fugitives. Sam's people in turn became uneasy over this new development and sought shelter among nearby trees. A battle was imminent.

At this moment a local settler named Martin Angell rode up, took in the situation, went over to the Indians (to whom he was well known), and told them they had better lay aside their arms as the Bostons were completely around them. The Indians agreed, thinking they had really been flanked, for word had reached them that part of the Oregonians were down-river and behind them. They started toward Steele's men making gestures of peace. In this way they could get closer to the forest on the near side of the river, away from the whites who might be flanking them, and also be protected from the Californians facing them.

When past Steele's men they broke and raced for the timber. Steele, perceiving the Indians' strategy and realizing that in the event of fighting those protected by the trees stood the best chance of walking away alive, cried out to his Californians to charge the woods. Firing instantly burst out on both sides but quite a number of Indians had to wait until their abandoned guns were brought up to them. This gave the white men an opportunity to seek shelter, which they badly needed.

As soon as fighting broke out Captain Lamerick sent several of his best horsemen to warn settlers in the area, then took the balance of his command and closed in upon what he thought was the Indians' rear.

Chief Sam, aborigine strategist of some note, mustered his best warriors and hurled them in a headlong charge at the protected whites. In crossing the river they lost a few men;

in crossing the open glade, where the council had originally been seated, they lost still more. By the time they were storming the trees beyond which the settlers were ensconced, they were being picked off like flies. Repulsed, they splashed back across the river to cover.

Steele's former hostages chose this moment to make a break for freedom. One of them had covered about thirty yards in the direction of the river before he was downed. The other got all the way across the river before he was shot through the head.

Sam then attempted to cut Steele's Californians off from Skinner's party but, at the sight of warriors racing for the breach, the Oregonians jumped up and ran toward the Californians. Sam's warriors were then routed by sustained firing from both groups. In this skirmish a settler was badly wounded. Also, at this time, Agent Skinner decided to go home. He left.

The battle dwindled when the Indians congregated upon the far side of the river and faded into the forest. By early dusk it was all over except for the aftermath, which came when some perfectly innocent miners downriver a few miles were ambushed and hacked to pieces by retreating Rogues. There were also several attacks upon isolated homesteads in the Indians' southward path.

Captain Lamerick with his Jacksonville volunteers went after the hostiles. He crossed the Rogue River in order to be in a position to deploy his men in the pass leading up to Table Rock. Elisha Steele went to the river's edge but, remaining upstream, completing the manoeuvre to catch the hostiles between two fires. This worked out unexpectedly well. When the hostiles found the Oregon volunteers ahead of them on the Table Rock trail, they turned back and ran into scouts from Steele's force. They were whipped and knew it.

Sam sent a messenger to sue for peace. Word was immediately sent to Alonzo Skinner to come back, which he did, and, on the 21st of July, 1852, the council was opened once more. Sam immediately capitulated to the demands of the Californians but said that there had been a mistake, that Scarface wasn't

really with his band at all, that the Indian thought to be Scarface was a Rogue of Chief Tipso's band, named Sullix, who resembled Scarface. This Indian was sent for, exhibited, and, to everyone's disgust, that was that.

Afterwards, Ben Wright—who featured prominently in the Modoc War—who was then scouring the Klamath River country for the wanted men, was discovered to have Scarface among the Indian scouts leading his posse. Then Scarface's audacity backfired. He went to Yreka on a visit, was recognized by miners, and pursued. Scarface was afoot, the miners on horseback. The chase lasted eighteen miles before Scarface was exhausted. He was taken to a nearby gulch where some oaks grew, and hanged. Thus Scarface Gulch got its name.

Red-faced Ben Wright showed up in Yreka with two Indians he had captured while they were fishing the Klamath. A trial was held at which most of Yreka was present and, upon the damning fact that the captives were Indians, one was sentenced to be hanged while the other was released.

Up in Oregon, Agent Skinner imposed a stern condition upon Chief Sam. He was not to associate with California Indians, especially the Shastas. The fact that the tribes were related made no difference. Sam, of course, agreed.

Then another of those incomprehensible things happened. Superintendent Dart was instructed by Washington to enter into no more treaties with Oregon Territory Indians. Past treaties were to be re-appraised, critiques were to be handed down. Dart promptly sent in his resignation.

Former Provisional Governor Joe Lane, then in Washington as Territorial Delegate, was trying mightily to have more soldiers sent to Oregon—with no success.

The balance of 1852 was a quiet year. The Snakes, northward, were glutted with plunder. Southward, the Rogues murdered no more than thirty or forty people. It was indeed a quiet Fall. Some of this can be attributed to the fact that all whites, settlers, emigrants and travellers, now travelled in groups, heavily armed and fired first and fastest. Competent woodsmen and plainsmen were available as guides; friendlies

could be engaged as scouts. Ambushes were frequently smoked out before actual clashes occurred. It became more profitable and safe to wipe out little parties of miners in isolated places than to attack settlements and big caravans. Bones are still turning up now and then in the dark and silent reaches of Oregon's limitless forests.

But southward, in that fringe area close to the Oregon line, in California, which for the purpose of this narrative must be included, Indian trouble increased. In the Tule Lake country of the Modocs, on the north side of the lake along the emigrant trail, was a spot known as Bloody Point. In 1852 the Indian attacks upon travellers there reached an all-time high.

So frequent were Indian molestations in general that the village of Yreka itself became alarmed. Emigrants passing through reported seeing Indian signal-fires upon the eminences around Tule Lake. Forty volunteers under Captain Charles McDermit were recruited to investigate. McDermit detached two men *en route* to Tule Lake for the purpose of guiding emigrants to safety. These men were attacked by Modocs. Both were wounded. They succeeded in escaping only after one of them shot a war-leader off his horse, which caused consternation among their attackers.

At Goose Lake, McDermit met ten wagons *en route* to Oregon. There were no more than twenty able-bodied men among the emigrants. McDermit detached two more men to guide these people. The wagontrain was thereafter guided away from hilly slopes and kept upon the broad plains. A semblance of discipline was established. Women and children who had walked beside the wagons were put inside. Every man was urged to arm himself with pistol and rifle.

The precautions were taken none too soon, for out of nowhere came a hard-riding band of warriors. The wagons were corralled, the men ordered to take defensive positions. Then they waited.

One of the Yreka volunteers rode out a short distance and called to the Indians, asking what they meant by charging the caravan. An Indian answered that their intentions were pacific

and offered to meet with the white man alone and unarmed.

J. C. Tolman, Wagonmaster, stayed back with his people. As the parley dragged on Tolman climbed upon a wagon-seat to get a better view, and immediately saw something those upon the ground were prevented from seeing because of the tall grass. While the war-leader and the Yrekan counselled, the other Indians were walking slowly toward the wagons, until a considerable portion of them were quite close. Each warrior had his quiver of arrows on his back but in agreement with the tenets of the council, none carried a bow. Wagonmaster Tolman, high on the wagonseat, saw that every approaching warrior had his bow tied to his moccasin and was trailing it along through the grass behind him.

Tolman immediately called to the guide that the Indians weren't unarmed. He then shouted the same warning to the armed men among the wagons. The guide thereupon told the war-leader to re-call his warriors, which was done. Then the war-leader refused to talk any more. He mounted his horse and led his treacherous followers away. The wagontrain went on its way eventually arriving unmolested in Oregon.

Word of two white-women captives among the Modocs filtered down to Yreka. Ben Wright led a party out to ascertain the truthfulness of the rumour. He found a wagon-train under attack near Bloody Point and went to its relief. The attackers fled, some going toward the lava beds from which they would, somewhat later, fight a war with the United States. Many of the Indians hid in the rank tules which lined the lakeshore. Wright's Yrekans followed this party and a close-quarter fight ensued, fought almost entirely among tules so thick it was impossible to recognize friend from foe until a man fired. About twenty-five Indians were killed.

It was also clear to the Yrekans that the Modocs had attacked many more wagontrains than had been reported. Rags of clothing taken from white men, women and children, were found on nearly every Modoc killed by volunteers. Other particles of clothing were found scattered across the Tule Lake plains. So intense did feeling become that news of California's

proposed retaliation spread northward to Jacksonville, over the Siskiyou. A company of Oregonians volunteered to go southward and aid in quelling the hostiles. Under John Ross these men cleared the Emigrant Trail over the mountains as they marched southward.

Beset by two strong forces the Modocs stood small chance of escaping. There were several encounters. In each the Modocs were whipped and lost heavily. A pincer movement was used successfully; Indian marauders caught between Californians and Oregonians were subdued and those lacking prudence were left lying. In time the Tule Lake area and the Emigrant Road were comparatively secure. Patrolling was done by volunteers aided, from time to time, by local Indian hunters.

Then, back in Oregon, Chief Sam's treaty disintegrated because Washington had refused to ratify any new pacts with Oregon Indians. One of Sam's lieutenants, Taylor by name, ambushed and wiped out a party of seven miners at Grave Creek. There were other depredations. By the time Oregon volunteers returned from the Modoc country with their tales of butchery witnessed there, Southern Oregon was also seething from similar local barbarities. What finally brought the settlers out armed for war was another rumour of captive white women, this time supposedly being held by Rogues atop of Table Rock. It was to prove as false as the rumour which had sent Ben Wright out, earlier.

About this time, unfortunately for him, Taylor was taken by a Jacksonville posse. With him were several other Rogues. In less than half an hour after their capture they were hanged. Encouraged, the Jacksonvillains went to Table Rock, stealthily made their way to the top and found, not only no white women prisoners, but only a handful of old Indians, which they naturally shot to death.

All this time the soldiers at Fort Orford had been languishing, incapable because of numbers and isolation of doing much else. The Coquilles, in their country, were behaving much as they had behaved since before the coming of the Army.

In fact, except for the settlers, volunteer units and armed posses, Oregon Territory was still fighting its single-handed war. The Army did a little but in comparison to what the civilians did it wasn't much.

Posses, volunteer units and individual groups of neighbouring settlers patrolled the Rogue River Valley and most other parts of the Northwest. Skinner had resigned as Indian Agent and Anson Dart had been replaced by Joel Palmer, hollow-eyed and thin-lipped. What military rule existed for Southern Oregon lay southward in California's Scott Valley; for Northern Oregon it was in places such as Portland, Salem and Vancouver. Astoria also had Regulars. But it was southward for the time being that Indian resistance was stiffest. Because of Federal directives there were no more official attempts at counselling. The Army, the United States Government, even the Territorial Government, were unable to arrest what now happened. Hardly a homestead in the southern country didn't have scars, graves and orphans, to mark the recurrent clashes with Indians. Feeling was such that not even women asked for mercy for the natives.

On the 4th of August, 1852, Richard Edwards was killed from ambush on his farm near Stuart Creek. The following day, Jim Wills and Rhodes Noland were likewise assassinated. Abandoned farm houses were set afire by bands of warriors. Horses were stampeded, cattle run off and butchered, travellers were fired upon when they attempted to reach settlements. Volunteers rode constantly, seeking hostiles which more often than not they didn't find, and more benignly aiding outlying settlers to reach places of safety.

On the 7th of August a posse captured two Shasta bucks painted for war. They were hanged at Jacksonville. Then another Indian was caught just beyond town and he, too, was hanged. At Ashland, southwards a short distance, volunteers under Isaac Hill came upon a band of Indians gathering acorns. They killed six and the rest fled. In retaliation, the natives attacked a wagontrain in camp on the outskirts of Ashland, killing two emigrants and wounding half a dozen

more, then waylaid a patrol of Ashlandites, killing Doctor William Rose and wounding still more whites.

The Siskiyou were virtually closed so far as travel was concerned. Their steep sides and tortuous trails, made headway by ox and mule train too slow and perilous. Indians lurked nearby, waiting. Whites on the Siskiyou's Oregon slopes fortified-up. Those on the California side joined in common defence. In between, and all around, Indians slaughtered, plundered and ambushed, at will.

A messenger from the Oregon side eventually got through to Captain Alden at Fort Jones, begging for succour. Alden set out immediately with twelve soldiers to try and clear the overland road. Another messenger got to the Governor of Oregon begging arms and ammunition if he couldn't send troops. *Materiel* was sent south under Lieutenant Kautz, and a volunteer unit of forty men under Captain J. W. Nesmith, a big, bluff, balding man, went along too. Among Kautz' *materiel* was a howitzer, sorely needed.

At Jacksonville, another volunteer army of two hundred settler-volunteers was raised. The command was divided among John Lamerick, T. T. Tierney, and John Miller. Southward, California contributed eighty men from Yreka under Jim Goodall and Jacob Rhodes. Eventually these units were incorporated under the command of Captain Alden, who by that time had reliable information that the hostiles were once again making rendezvous at Table Rock for a big celebration.

Alden was ready to start for Table Rock when news came of depredation closer in. Before Alden could convince the volunteers that this was being done by bands on their way northward to the rendezvous, his army had melted away to its original nucleus of twelve Regulars and eighty volunteers. Alden was compelled to postpone his attack upon hostiles at Table Rock—who had their celebration—and not until the 15th of August was he able to take the field. By that date his volunteers had returned in sufficient numbers to make an expedition possible.

When Alden finally found the natives they were downriver

from Table Rock with scouts out in all directions. Alden's main command was still a considerable distance off when the Indians, apprised of his coming by their scouts, fired the forest he was to ride through.

On the 17th some Yrekans, twenty-five strong, located the Indians on Evans Creek, north of Table Rock. Captain Ely, in command, would not attack. His force wasn't strong enough. Instead, he led his men to an eminence where Indians couldn't surprise him, and bivouacked, awaiting the rest of the command. The Indians surrounded Ely's camp in the night, poured a withering and unexpected volley into his ranks and killed two Californians. A sharp fight began which lasted almost half a day. Ely's men fell back to the protective shadows of the forest. The Indians did likewise. Yrekans injured included four killed and four wounded. Ely was among the latter. When Goodall and the rest of the Californians came storming up in the afternoon the Indians fled.

Territorial Delegate Joe Lane was at his home in Roseburg when news of this battle reached him. He immediately gathered up thirteen neighbours and started south. When he arrived, Captain Alden offered him supreme command, which Lane assumed. He deployed the whites in a long skirmish line between the hostiles and the settlements, then marched inland in an attempt to force a decisive battle.

On the 24th of August a segment of this line came upon Indians in an encampment. A rattle of musketry opened hostilities and among the first casualties was Captain Alden. His wound was serious. It caused his death two years later.

The hostiles had erected a barricade of fallen trees. They appeared to have ample guns and ammunition. The barricade, besides being well manned, was also impossible to approach without great danger to attackers. While Joe Lane pondered, the Indians kept up a steady fire. There was only one way to go, as Lane saw it, and that was forward. Lane personally led the charge. A ball struck him in the right arm. Momentarily incapacitated, Lane ordered the volunteers to press the fight and went rearward to have his wound cared for.

In the tumult of shouting and shooting the Indians heard Joe Lane's name called out several times. Inferring that he was in charge and knowing him from old, the Indians called out that they didn't want to fight Joe Lane. When Lane returned to the firing line he was informed of this. He was also told by volunteer leaders they didn't want any more councils; they had come out to whip Indians not talk to them. Lane resolved the problem by calling for a vote, by hands, whether to fight or counsel. The hands were counted while the battle raged. The upshot was that two men should be sent to parley with the natives. Suspecting treachery, the volunteers refused to approve of Lane's going. Two Oregonians named Jim Bruce and Bob Metcalf offered to go. But when Metcalf and Bruce met the hostiles they were told that the Indians wouldn't talk to anyone but Joe Lane.

Lane then covered his wounded arm with a cloak and went to the Indian stronghold. He was met by his namesake, Chief Joe. With Chief Joe was nettlesome old Chief Sam. The headsmen told Lane they were tired of fighting and said that all they'd ever asked was to be left alone in peace.

Lane proposed terms. One of these was that the Rogues must agree to enter a reservation. The chiefs agreed. Lane then returned to his own lines where three dead volunteers were being buried and four wounded were being cared for. Indian losses were twenty-eight killed and wounded. Some volunteers, newly-arrived, brushed aside Lane's insistence that the fight was over and terms agreed upon. It required the unanimous decision of the Regulars and the volunteers who had fought the battle, to restrain the newcomers from attacking the Indians.

For two days both sides camped within a stone's throw of each other. Indian women carried water and food to injured settlers as well as injured Indians. On the 29th, both sides broke camp and started down out of the hills toward the valley, parallel with one another. Another council was to be held near Table Rock but before anything concrete could be put forth by Lane he had to procure official sanction from

Joel Palmer, Superintendent of Indian Affairs. The council was held in abeyance until Palmer could be sent for.

Delay was fatal.

Shortly after the Evans Creek fight, Lieutenant Thomas Frazell with a company of men met and fought a band of Rogues at Long's Ferry. Frazell and one enlisted man were killed before both sides withdrew. Lieutenant Frazell belonged to Captain Owens' company of Regulars from inland. In retaliation for his killing, Owens caught a small band of Indians and killed every one of them. About this time, Martin Angell, the settler who had tried to avert the fight between Indians and Elisha Steele's Californians and Alonzo Skinner's Oregonians, glimpsed an Indian stealthily crossing his farm and shot the warrior dead.

Captain Smith, so long out of things at Fort Orford, then came down the Rogue River Valley with his twelve dragoons and found Lane's bivouac. About the same time, Captain Nesmith and Lieutenant Kautz arrived with their men and a howitzer. Reinforced, in the best bargaining position the whites had occupied to date in Southern Oregon, Joe Lane reconvened the council. Wise Joe demanded a prominent hostage as soon as he saw that Indian reinforcements were also coming up. This was acceded to and Chief Joe's son was handed over.

Regular Army Colonel Ross was present. The interpreter was Bob Metcalf. Chief Sam opened by insisting that all he had ever wanted was peace. Chief Joe didn't go quite that far but insisted that he now wanted peace. Chief Jim echoed the other two. Chief Limpy then arose and dumbfounded everyone by stating firmly that he not only didn't want peace, he didn't want any white people in Indian country. Encouraged, by this, another hostile leader, Chief George from the Applegate country, seconded Limpy. Lane promptly demanded more hostages, which were sent up. He then said the Indians would be given sixty thousand dollars worth of trade goods for their lands on the Rogue River, deductible from which would be claims for depredations. In response to queries concerning the reservation, Lane told the Indians they would for the present

be confined to the one hundred miles immediately surrounding Table Rock. He further said that the laws of the United States must henceforth be recognized as binding upon the natives as they were upon the whites and that punishment for Indians who violated the laws would be exactly the same for natives as for white people.

With the exception of Chiefs Limpy and George, the Indians agreed to Lane's terms of capitulation. Southern Oregon appeared to be on the verge of its much sought-after, long prayed-for, peace.

Most of the volunteers returned to their homes but a company under John Miller continued on southward to take part in the patrolling of the Tule Lake country. These men fought in several minor battles.

Then, in the Fall of 1853, Indians were found again to be running off horses and cattle in Illinois Valley. Settlers and miners asked that troops be sent to protect them. Lieutenant Radford from Fort Lane (built on the spot of the 1852 council near Table Rock), went after the raiders. He was reinforced by Regulars under Silas Casey, victor of the fight with the Coquilles near Fort Orford. The marauders were eventually found and fought. A dozen Indians were killed or wounded while two soldiers were killed outright and four were wounded. The vanquished warriors then offered to make a treaty, which was done, and the Illinois Valley was comparatively quiet until early 1854 when some miners lost horses to unknown persons and proceeded to track them down.

In the course of their tracking they came across a mixed party of travelling Indians. Any miner knew that all Indians were born and raised horsethieves. They thereupon attacked the band, killed several, had two of their own party wounded, and never found their horses although they appropriated all those belonging to the attacked natives.

In January of 1854, Chief Bill with a mixed band of Shastas, Rogues, and Modocs, stampeded horses belonging to miners working Cottonwood Creek at Henley, California, at the southern foot of the Siskiyou. One of the miners, Jack Oldfield,

was shot and killed when he came upon the hostiles driving off the horses. The other miners heard the shot, found their horses gone and Oldfield dead, secured other mounts and took up the trail of the Indians.

The route of the horsethieves was up the Klamath River toward a wild and rocky escarpment above present-day Copco Lake. *En route*, the Indians laid an ambush. All three of the pursuing miners rode into it and were killed: Hiram Hulén, John Clark and Wesley Mayden.

Meanwhile, back at Henley, other miners and settlers had joined in the pursuit. When they found the plundered bodies of Mayden, Hulén and Clark, they immediately sent a rider to Fort Jones for the Army, then proceeded upriver after the Indians, who were brought to bay in a cave part way up an almost perpendicular cliff. From within this cave the raiders had an excellent view of all approaches.

Directly above the cave the cliff went straight up. Barring a prolonged siege no one could dislodge the killers. The settlers kept them bottled up until Captain Judah and twenty regulars arrived from Fort Jones. Fortunately, a smaller cave a scant eighty feet from that occupied by the hostiles had a spring coming out of its floor. The water was cold and bracing.

The Indians were disinclined to come out of the cave and no one in his right mind would attempt to approach it from the comparatively exposed northern slope. One Henleyite circled around behind and came out atop the cliff overlooking the cave. When he bent to peer down an Indian shot him squarely between the eyes. He landed in the rocks at the foot of the cliff.

Captain Judah sent to Fort Jones for a howitzer; meanwhile the Regulars and volunteers laid a siege. Commanding the freshly arrived contingent of fifteen dragoons from Fort Jones with the howitzer, were Captain A. J. Smith and Lieutenant Ogle. Captain of the Henley men was R. C. Geiger, twenty-six years of age.

On the 27th, there was a slight argument over the way the fight was being conducted by the Army. It was then agreed

that Captain Geiger would lead the Henleyites in a frontal attack upon the cave after the Army had bombarded it with their howitzer. Aside from deafening noise the field-gun accomplished little beyond scoring the cliff-face and breaking limbs from nearby oaks. As soon as the cannonade was finished, Geiger led his Henleyites. The Indians, undaunted, met them with an accurate volley. Captain Geiger fell with a musket ball through the heart and his demoralized followers retired.

On the 28th, Captain Smith and one settler approached the cave with a white flag. They offered to counsel. The Indians agreed and in the course of the following talks appear to have convinced Smith that the miners had molested their women. This was to the complete disgust of the miners who wrathfully started back toward Henley. *En route*, the returning civilians met another posse coming up the river, among whom was Tom Davis. Upon being told what had happened at the cave, the combined groups made a little camp and awaited the soldiers whom they knew would be coming downriver shortly.

Meanwhile Captain Smith accepted the apologies of the hostiles and started south in company with them. When he met the men from Henley, who by then far out-numbered the soldiers, there was a brisk argument. Captain Smith did not feel duty-bound to fight the miners and settlers. He left the Indians, splashed across the Klamath and headed for Fort Jones. The Henleyites immediately set upon the Indians and killed every one of them. Vengeance lacked subtlety in 1854 Henley, California, but it was thorough.

As if the causes for killings were not strong enough, Congress, in one of its rashes of economy enacted an amendment to Indian policy which stipulated that more than one tribe of Indians should be put upon each reservation. A situation comparable to putting ten male tigers in the same cage. The Coquilles, traditional and implacable foemen of the Rogue River tribesmen were lumped with sundry other tribes, under the designation "Rogue River Indians".

When this was explained to the Rogues who remained upon the Table Rock reserve, they promptly "went out". First to

feel their resentment were two unsuspecting travellers on the Jacksonville-Illinois Valley road. Both were murdered.

Superintendent Joel Palmer strove frantically to avert anarchy and Captain Smith was sent out from Fort Lane to find and take into custody the fleeing natives. He found their scouts, was fired upon and went after them in earnest. There were several running fights and a few Indian casualties. Before it ended, the Indians had scattered, disappeared in the forests.

Some drunk hostiles down on the Klamath River attacked a group of ten miners. It was afterwards proven that a white man had traded them whisky. When the smoke cleared away, all ten miners were dead, plus three Indians. As this occurred in California, the volunteer unit which was formed to retaliate was exclusively Californians. They tracked the sobering warriors to the Rogue River in Southern Oregon and presented to Captain Smith at Fort Lane a demand for the killers. Smith refused to honour the demand upon the grounds that, as a regular army officer in Oregon, he was not bound to comply with civilian requests by Californians. This was not the first, nor was it to be the last, time that friction would arise between Regulars and settler-volunteers, and while the term "volunteer" was used freely, officially designated volunteers were not nearly as plentiful as those who rode under the name would indicate. The Californians returned to Siskiyou County, procured legal warrants and had them served upon Oregon officials. Later, when the fugitives were found and taken into custody, they were turned over to the Californians who then hung them.

Again, Regulars were transporting two killer-bucks by canoe to Fort Orford when a lynch-mob of settlers lined the shore and demanded that the Indians be turned over to them. When the soldiers refused, the settlers fired upon the canoes and killed both Indians. The Regulars then returned the settlers' fire, killed two civilians outright and wounded a third so badly that he died the following day.

So—settlers fought Indians, Indians fought settlers and soldiers, and Regulars fought civilians, Indians, and volunteers.

Joel Palmer's hopes collapsed for creating order where anarchy existed.

On the 2nd of September, settlers invaded the Table Rock Reservation, attacked what Indians they found there and had one man, Grenville Kenne, killed. On the 24th, Indians killed Calvin Fields and John Cunningham and wounded several others in the same party, which was crossing the Siskiyou with an ox caravan; these Indians were said to be survivors of the Table Rock affair.

On the 25th, Sam Warner was killed in almost the identical spot while riding over the Siskiyou. In the first week of October, marauders from the reservation were caught and attacked on Butte Creek by Major Lupton of the Regulars. The fighting was almost toe-to-toe. Major Lupton was killed, eleven of his Regulars were wounded and the Indians lost about thirty killed and wounded. The same day, Indians caught a pack-train near Jewett's Ferry on the Rogue and killed both packers.

Isaac Shelton of Yreka was attacked on the 9th of October; he was wounded but escaped. Not so fortunate were J. K. Jones and Mrs. Jones whose homestead was attacked. Both Joneses were killed. The Wagoner homestead nearby was also attacked. Wagoner was away but his wife and child were roasted alive inside the cabin. Settler George W. Harris heard the Indians coming through the woods, ran to his cabin, secured a gun and shot dead the first Indian to ride out of the trees. He then reloaded and wounded another buck but was then killed in his own doorway. Harris' wife dragged her husband's body inside, barred the door, shuttered the windows and held the hostiles off with her dead husband's musket until dark, when the Indians picked up their dead and wounded and withdrew.

Witnesses of these and countless similar outrages carried the news to Jacksonville, where Major Fitzgerald and his Regulars were. Before Fitzgerald could get under way, twenty volunteers sprang up, armed and eager, took the trail and pounded after the Indians. Eventually Fitzgerald's Regulars, fifty-five strong, caught up with the irregulars at the Wagoner place.

They came upon a party of looting Indians there. Since the volunteers were slightly ahead of the soldiers the Indians thought they were all the enemies around and pitched into them. When Fitzgerald's troopers came hurrying up, the hostiles fled. Pursuit was out of the question. Aside from the fact that it was getting late in the day the horses of both parties were exhausted.

An urgent appeal for aid was dispatched to the Governor, the military commander at Vancouver, and the Superintendent of Indian Affairs. Although the military was considerably stronger than it had been a decade before, when it had first arrived in the Northwest, it was nevertheless still far too small to patrol all of Oregon and fight every band of hostiles. This was pointed out to the petitioners in several letters. The Southern Oregonians liked not one whit this reply to their appeal.

The Governor and Joel Palmer then advised the belcaguered settlers to form volunteer units! The fact that these had been operating for several years under various designations appears to have been overlooked. At any rate, an altogether new force was organized: the 9th Regiment of Oregon Militia. Immediately there was trouble. First, there weren't enough guns. Secondly, the Army frowned upon the forming of a settler-army. Thirdly, the question of command aroused some bitterness. However, in due time the 9th Militia Regiment took the field.

It was nowhere near, however, when on the 17th of October at Skull Bar on the Rogue River, in particularly rugged terrain, a posse of settlers located Indians and setit forward a skirmishing party to flush them out into the open. Instead of running, the band of Indians turned out to be a very aggressive and heavily armed war-party. One skirmisher was killed; the rest were chased back to their friends. Fortunately—in a sense—Regular Army Lieutenant Williamson came upon the scene as activities were becoming warm. He led an attack upon the hostiles with his entire force. The battle lasted five hours. Williamson was seriously wounded, his men were

pushed steadily back, and, finally, the hostiles hurled an attack upon the main body of invaders. Failing to dislodge the settlers and soldiers with gunfire, they resorted to fire-arrows in an attempt to ignite the underbush. This had little effect, so the war-leader of the hostiles led a final attack. When he was killed, the natives withdrew, drew up siege lines and prepared to spend the night on the spot. By dark, nearly half the volunteer and Regular command was either dead or wounded; all would surely have been wiped out but for the traditional withdrawal of Indians with nightfall. In the small hours the survivors managed to sneak away.

The land ran red. Hardly a creek, a ford, or a homestead, wasn't bullet marked and made ghastly by rotting bodies. There were orphaned children by the score, homeless animals and abandoned farms. In the southern part of the Territory, to offset all this were less than one hundred Regulars, plus several part-time bands of volunteer units. The country was vast, timbered and trackless. Indians knew every inch, every cranny of it. They had every advantage, even that of pigmentation, in their favour. Indian scouts watched every road, every trail; they knew which way the volunteers rode, avoided fights when they chose and attacked when they felt the odds were favourable.

Southern Oregon Indians may not have possessed the splendid feather-culture of the more romanticized and colourful Plains Indians—Dahkota, Hidatsa, Bloods, Piegans—but they would fight a pitched battle, which the others rarely, if ever, did.

Then orders recalled Major Fitzgerald to Vancouver. *En route* Fitzgerald met a very large party of Indians at Grave Creek. The Indians drew up and sat stone-still upon their horses, athwart Fitzgerald's road. He withdrew, sent a courier riding for help, and got into a defensive position. The Indians were leisurely in their preparations to fight. Before they were ready, Colonel Ross, several flying-companies of Regulars and two hundred and fifty volunteers arrived. The Indians met this new force with the same equanimity,

withdrew out of gunshot range and sat down to counsel. Two more companies arrived, sent by then-Governor Curry.

Among Colonel Ross' units was Captain Smith from Fort Lane. He was ordered to charge the Indians, to clear the road of them. The Indians stood fast, absorbed his charge, then hurled Smith back with losses. Nightfall ended the first day's hostilities.

On the second day the Indians attacked, finally. The battle was desperate, often hand-to-hand, and slowly the Indians were forced back. They reformed, then, for some obscure reason, failed to return to the attack. The whites withdrew, were not pursued, and both sides were glad to end the battle. Indian losses were unknown but the white men had four dead among the Regulars and thirteen dead among the volunteers. The number of wounded exceeded fifty.

A Territorial emergency existed. Governor Curry authorized and encouraged the raising of two additional forces of volunteers on large scale. One, with headquarters at Jacksonville, was to be known as the Southern Battalion. The other, or Northern Battalion, was to be based at Roseburg for the protection of the central and upper sections of the Territory. While the Army was adamantly against this move, its lines were spread too thin for much to be accomplished without aid from volunteer units. In the field, the men got along fairly well, volunteer and Regular being literally knocked into one another's arms: the sources of antagonism seemed to be where the official level lay. In more than one instance, volunteers came to the aid of embattled Regulars. The real dislike was yet to come.

Fights, fights, fights. They never ended. The year went its full swing of butchery, of massacre and miracle, of unbelievable suffering and discomfort.

Then, as in the Plains Wars eastward and southward, starvation strategy was advocated, to eliminate, in so far as was possible, the Indians' means of existence. Where the mighty Sioux and Cheyennes were humbled by the buffalo slaughter, the Northwestern Indians were theoretically cut off from means for survival by the restriction of packtrains and

emigrant traffic, the sources from which Indians could acquire food, guns and munitions. Where these necessities had to be moved, strong escorts went along. This wasn't nearly as sound in practice as it was in theory. There were enough settler cabins, isolated settlements, individual travellers who ignored orders, for war parties to glean all they needed.

The list of engagements fought during 1855 is endless. Caught on the Applegate River and forced-up for the winter, a band of hostiles were routed by a howitzer from Fort Lane. Those fortunate enough to escape did so by bellying up to the picket lines in the darkness, leaping up with bloodcurdling screams and racing straight through the astonished soldiers and into the forest beyond.

On Christmas eve, Miles Alcorn's volunteers found a huddled Indian camp on Little Butte Creek, charged it and managed to kill eight Indians before the others fled into the night.

Lieutenant Colonel Martin ordered that no Indian prisoners were to be taken.

Some Indian women, children and warriors, were marched up north to the Yamhill Agency and Indian Agent Bob Metcalf refused to harbour them, saying that his reservation Indians were traditional enemies of all Rogues. The Indians were driven back southward again, walking all the way through snow and biting cold. Six babies perished in their mothers' arms, literally frozen stiff.

Much more was to come: seas of blood, tiers of corpses, atrocities too horrible to record. Scattered bands of Rogues went northward toward the country of the Coquilles. They incited what few bands they found up there and spread a reign of terror throughout central Oregon but managed to stay away from the Coquilles who were then living according to an uneasy, non-interference agreement with local settlers and miners. When Rogue-incited atrocities began to make their appearance, the whites suspected that not all were committed by southern tribesmen. The Coquilles, in turn, began to fear lest the settlers mistake them—any Indian—for a Rogue. They were told the white-men's plan was to exterminate all

Indians; some believed it. There were intermittent skirmishes between Coquilles and Rogues, Rogues and settlers and Coquilles and settlers. Some real fighting was in prospect.

The Governor then made it unlawful for independent contingents of settlers to take the field. Except for causing ire among the whites this was largely ignored when settlers wanted to ride.

Northward, Indian Agent Drew suspected Coquilles and Coos Bay Indians were plotting a large scale massacre of white settlers. An attack was hurriedly launched upon the combined bands. Four warriors were killed, four captured, and the rest routed. The four captives were hanged on the spot: left dangling as a warning to all Indians.

A volunteer unit was officially formed, placed under Captain John Poland, and established its encampment at Big Bend in 1856. On Washington's birthday, Captain Poland with all but ten of his command attended a ball at the nearby settlement of Gold Beach. The ten guards left behind were attacked by Indians. Eight were killed and two fled. One of these, Charles Foster, hid in the underbush until it was safe to carry the news to nearby Fort Orford.

Captain Poland and Indian Agent Ben Wright (not the same Ben Wright of Northern California, Modoc War, fame), were visiting together, totally unaware of the attack upon the volunteer bivouac. Several presumed friendly Indians appeared and asked both men to come to their village where a Rogue was stirring up trouble. Poland and Wright went and were stabbed to death: their bodies hacked to pieces; Wright's heart cooked and eaten.

Lieutenant Bledsoe was elected to replace Captain Poland and a blockhouse in course of construction at the bivouac was named "Miner's Fort" and rushed to completion. One hundred men, women and children were billeted in it. Bledsoe also had all the provisions, ammunition and means for defence, from the surrounding area, put inside—none too soon. Indians attacked in large force, failed to breach the log walls and established a siege. Rescues were attempted by sea but were

unavailing. Two schooners, the *Nelly* and the *Gold Beach*, the latter loaded with volunteers eager to fight, had to sail away without making a landing, shoals near the shore being too treacherous.

The siege lasted a full month: thirty days and nights of horror and suffering. It was lifted when a mixed command of Regulars and volunteers hacked their way through the forests and marshes from inland. This party was under the personal command of Lieutenant Colonel Buchanan, from the headquarters section of the Commanding General, Pacific Division.

At this time, the Commanding General was John Ellis Wool, who had come belatedly to the Northwest from San Francisco. Wool had brought along an attitude by no means rare in those days, and later, among Regular Army officers. General Wool—seventy years old at this time—gave specific and repeated orders to his subordinate officers that they were not to recognize nor counsel with volunteer units or citizen-soldiers of any kind, in the field or off. In order to set an example of what he meant, when he arrived in Oregon he did not call upon Governor Curry. Moreover, Wool made it very plain that under no circumstances were Regulars, in difficulties, to seek aid from citizen units, regardless of seeming necessity.

It has been said of Wool that he was past the age when a man should be conducting affairs as vigorous as an Indian campaign. This must be refuted in view of Wool's subsequent Civil War record. He distinguished himself notably in that struggle and retired from the Army at the age of seventy-nine.

In the Northwest, Wool's outspoken antipathy for volunteers of any kind infuriated the embattled settlers. To show his scorn of this, Wool sent a detachment of Regulars from Vancouver to Klamath Lake and back, and said he had done it to protect Indians from the whites.

Lieutenant Colonel Buchanan then told volunteers they had no business fighting Indians, something they did not understand. He stated, further, that he had been sent west to show settlers ignorant of military science how to fight.

General Wool then ordered Captain Smith and Lieutenant

Colonel Buchanan to prohibit settlers from molesting Indians in their areas, and Oregon Territory's officials were chewing nails and spitting rust in frustrated wrath. The civilian authorities retaliated by appointing John K. Lamerick to be Brigadier General of Militia. Then there was a widespread shake-up of volunteer units and the Governor, not so much out of spite as out of necessity, rescinded an earlier order prohibiting the use of vigilante units, and authorized the communities to raise "Minute Men". These were to have unlimited scope in their local fields.

An overall view of Oregon at this time would show that many of the men who had hurried to California's gold fields in '49 had returned. Also, news of the richness of the ground, the moderateness of the climate, the unlimited resources, had spread eastward. Now a new kind of emigrant poured into the Northwest: the farmer. Another factor of some importance to the flow of emigration was that, back in the States, sharp lines were being drawn for the United States' greatest struggle. Secession; slavery, State's Rights—all the angry words and grim ideals that went to make up the Civil War, were in the air.

Westward lay no fealties, no tap-root traditions. Westward was Oregon, independence, free land, a new home and a fresh start. Blood ran, but peril has never yet stopped a tide of freedom-seekers. It did not then.

In 1857 a convention met at Salem to frame a State constitution, to prohibit slavery in Oregon Territory, but also to deny the right of land ownership to black people. They could come to Oregon, live and labour and die there, but they could not execute contracts or own land. Naively the assembly men then went on to limit Oregon's indebtedness to fifty thousand dollars. With these stipulations upon record, Oregon shrewdly appealed for statehood at a time when the Federalists and Secessionists were battling to gain adherents. Oregon had prohibited slavery, which appealed to the North. She had likewise relegated black people to a position of worthlessness, which appealed to the South. On the 14th of February, 1859,

Oregon was admitted to the United States. Her Territorial status changed irrevocably to statehood. A long and protracted battle was ended. But much was to happen between 1857 and 1859; was even then happening, for the Northern Battalion and the Southern Battalion had correlated a tactical means for ending, once and for all, the bitter, interminable Indian battles. Driving up from the south and down from the north, both battalions would drive Indians between them until a final battle could be joined, fought conclusively, the Indians be vanquished and peace restored.

The Northern Battalion numbered two hundred and ten effectives; Southern Battalion three hundred and thirty-five. They punched their respective ways through the wilderness, crossing vast plains, winding through gloomy forests and plunging down into dark and unexplored canyons: until, by the 24th of April, 1857, they arrived within howitzer range of each other at Big Meadows. There, with tall grass waving, a turquoise sky overhead, the sighing wind in their faces—were no Indians.

The situation had been much like holding water in a sieve. If all the land had been plains there might have been a way to hedge in the Indians, surround them perhaps corral and capture them all. But in Oregon every tree was a fortress, each clump of underbush a thorny passageway to escape. The idea had been fine; it was just not practical.

There were several local bands in the country adjacent to Big Meadows and once these began shooting at cattle driven along by the militia, for sustenance. Videttes charged the Indians who fled. Mounted militiamen angrily scouted up an Indian village, stealthily approached within gunshot and attacked. In the ensuing confusion, several warriors were killed along with a number of women and children. Most of the bucks re-formed beyond the village, made a stand among some boulders and by long range gunfire tried to hold the soldiers away from the village until the balance of their people could escape. The soldiers appeared to stop in the face of this covering fire. Actually, they were using themselves as bait in a trap

previously devised, for, while the warriors were concentrating upon the attackers in front of their village, an even stronger force got close behind them and poured a devastating fire upon the hapless bucks. Notwithstanding, the Indians kept both parties of whites at bay all day long and managed to withdraw after nightfall, but, in this instance, leaving their dead and wounded behind.

Shortly after this fruitless engagement the soldiers stumbled upon something none of them had ever seen before. It was one of those secret places where Indians had congregated since time out of mind in the hidden fastnesses of the back country. The ground for acres around was packed as though made of rock. There were countless bones of animals. Ruins of ancient hutments were scattered over the area and stone rings abounded where fires had been kindled down the centuries. Aside from the archeological discovery of this devastated village, nothing came of the campaign designed to end all campaigns.

Also, by 1856, the Regulars were beginning to show a little weight. Their practice, to date, in view of limited numbers, had been to punish hostiles after depredations were committed. This was in contrast to the stand taken by settlers—good Injun, dead Injun. Settlers had an aversion to waiting until they were victims of atrocity before attacking Indians. The Army learnt a lesson in this regard when Buchanan's force was fired upon by Indians hidden among the trees. Buchanan charged his annoyers who fled precipitately. When the soldiers followed, they became lost in the forest. The Indians had a hey-day pumping musket balls and arrows into them while they struggled to get clear of the trees, find their companions and re-form. There had been no provocation* for the attack.

Then an Army supply train was ambushed on the Chetcoe River. One soldier-escort was killed and several were wounded before the Indians could be beaten off. This and other similar attacks upon soldiers, seemingly without cause, were probably caused by a recent innovation adopted by settlers and volunteer units in the field. They would locate hostiles and harass them in the direction where Regulars were known to be.

Significantly, some of the bands, the less vigorous and least warlike, began to come in and surrender. They even asked to be placed upon reservations. Existence as they now knew it, with whites likely to burst out of the trees at any time, was wearing down the smaller, less virile bands. By this time reservations were well established in Oregon. When Indians were beaten badly enough, decimated, even being billeted among traditional enemies was preferable to becoming trophies for whites in and out of uniform.

The effect of this initial crumbling of Indian resistance wasn't all one might imagine, however. Primarily it succeeded in clearing the woods of sneak-killers, thieves and petty bands of raiders who had never been strong enough separately or through alliances to cause great harm. It in no way lessened the fighting strength or resolve of the more war-like tribes. Settler-bitterness was unaltered by these minor surrenders.

An example of the 1856 attitude of the white people can be seen in the case of captured Indians. Natives participating in this particularly unpleasant episode were inadvertently caught between volunteers on the one hand and a strong force of Regulars on the other hand. The natives were surrounded and compelled to surrender. A parley was then held among the captors as to disposition of their hostages. It was decided to herd the Indians northward to a reservation. The Indians refused to march. They were threatened and prodded with bayonets. About fifty of them still refused to leave, saying they preferred to die in their own country. The whites promised to oblige them unless they moved along. The Indians remained obdurate. The whites thereupon fired into them. The squaws trilled a death chant. Surviving Indians still refused to move. Those who could walk were then driven into a river and drowned. The rest, crushed and embittered, were driven to the reservation.

Many Indians died like that, refusing to take a backward step. Many more died for refusing to surrender. Too much blood had been spilt, too much hatred engendered on both sides to permit the settling of disputes founded in the depths

of outrage, despair, and suffering. It has been said that Indians were less capable of forgiveness than were whites. The truth was that one race was no different from the other in this respect.

Indian prisoners were something else again, largely. Those who lacked the courage to die for ideals, far and away the greater majority of Indians, performed an invaluable service to their own people and the whites. They acted as messengers to hostile bands. In this way many an Indian was saved from death and brought eventually to see the futility of last-ditch defiance. But use of native messengers didn't always turn out so well either; not until there was no longer a shred of doubt about the outcome of the Indians' fight for country and survival.

For instance: on the 21st of May, 1858, Chiefs George, John and old Limpy, with members of their bands, came in for a parley as requested of them by Joel Palmer, who had sent a reservation Indian out with the message. Suspicious of the white men, the chiefs insisted upon assurances of the most solemn kind that they would not be restrained after the council regardless of their decisions to the proposals of the whites. This was promised them and the council was convened.

After considerable recitation of the blandishments of reservation life by the whites, Chief John stood up and said he would die before he would go onto a reservation. In spite of John's vehemence, however, the other chiefs agreed to lay aside their arms and "come in". John stumped up and down arguing with them, to no avail. They then prevailed upon Chief John, exhorting him to think of his people. He capitulated, eventually. The council then broke up, the chiefs departing to get all their bands together, for they were to report to Palmer's representatives no later than the 26th, which didn't give them much time.

At the place of rendezvous on the 26th, Captain Smith from Fort Lane, with dragoons and a howitzer, was on hand to receive the bands. No Indians showed up. During his prolonged wait an Indian woman appeared, warned Smith

that Chief John had won the other chiefs over to his viewpoint and that they were all planning to attack Smith on the 27th.

Smith immediately moved his camp to a more defensible position and sent a courier to Lieutenant Colonel Buchanan for reinforcements. No one slept during the night of the 26th: the time was spent working feverishly to prepare log and mud earthworks. Smith had chosen his spot well. In front and on one side of him were nearly vertical cliffs. In two other directions were gradual slopes nearly devoid of cover for attackers.

True to his information, at dawn on the 27th Indians appeared upon nearby slopes. A strong mounted force of them approached Smith's eminence *via* one of the slopes. Smith called upon them to stop. They halted and a spokesman said they had come, true to the agreement, to lay down their arms and surrender. Smith ordered several men to man the howitzer. Upon understanding the purpose of the captain's order the Indians whirled their horses and fled back down the slope.

For several hours nothing happened. The Indians were in no hurry to open hostilities; they had a very valid reason. Two additional war parties were approaching the soldiers from opposite directions. The nearest party had to wait while the farthest got into position. A simultaneous charge was then launched to the excited pleasure of several hundred Indian spectators who screamed at the tops of their lungs. Smith's howitzer was aimed in an easterly direction. When the hurtling horsemen were well within range he ordered the gun fired. Indians who were not swept away by the shot were terrified by the explosion. They fled. Attackers coming from the west received the undivided attention of Smith's riflemen. That charge was also repulsed.

The Indians then withdrew, counselled, hurled several more attacks which were equally unsuccessful and then tried stalking the besieged men. In this undertaking the hostiles managed to slay several exposed dragoons. A few hostiles tried slithering up the face of the cliff. This was discontinued when several were shot and rolled down through the underbush in full sight of the spectators who set up a great howl of anguish.

Nightfall ended the first day's fighting. The Indians withdrew. The dragoons had been without sleep or drinking water for twenty-four hours.

On the 28th, the Indians returned. Smith's men were thirsty and exhausted. For the first hours the hostiles contented themselves with shouting imprecations, reminding the white men of a law which stated that any Indian found off a reservation was to be considered hostile and be hanged. This, they told the besieged soldiers, was exactly what was in store for them. They exhibited some ropes made of vines. Captain Smith was then asked to hang himself and save the Indians the trouble. In time, tiring of this, the Indians crawled close to the base of the cliff where they were comparatively safe, and with long hooked poles attempted to reach inside the earthworks and snag men or equipment. Sporadic, long range duelling occupied the balance of the day. The attackers were disinclined to try any more frontal attacks. The dumbest among them knew that thirst would eventually force the soldiers to leave their eyrie; which was quite correct.

To make matters worse, the defenders could plainly see two rippling creeks from their loft. After nightfall the besiegers built large fires, sang and danced and plotted the massacre of the soldiers—all within sight and hearing of the dragoons.

On the 29th, tiring of the siege, the Indians launched another spectacular *en masse* offensive. While the soldiers were occupied in repulsing this, afar off could be heard blasts from a bugle being sounded with great urgency. So sure had the natives been of their prey that they had neglected to set out scouts. Moreover, they knew there were no other soldiers in the vicinity. In this they were correct, for the soldiers who were now hurrying to Smith's relief were not Buchanan's force but another party *en route* southward to a new duty-station.

In one of those thrilling occurrences of succour with which the Indian wars are spotted, Captain Augur of the 4th Infantry arrived unexpectedly upon the scene, struck the Indians in the flank and scattered spectators—squaws, old men, children—in every direction. He broke through the rear ranks of warriors

with sufficient strength to demoralize the entire Indian force—with just seventy-five Regulars.

Captain Augur lost five men. The following day their hacked corpses were found hanging from trees. Indian warriors in full retreat ran head-on into Buchanan's command which was also flying to the rescue. A surround was effected; an ultimatum of fight and die or surrender was made. The Indians surrendered.

Ironically, Joel Palmer turned up dressed for the formal surrender ceremonies which were to have taken place on the 26th. Smith's dragoons and Augur's infantrymen corralled as many of the hostiles as were still loitering in the neighbourhood. Many had made good their escape, however. When Buchanan came up with more prisoners, Palmer tried again to achieve peace. He released hostages with a request that involved chieftains meet him at once. His answer wasn't long in coming back. Chief John dared the white men to come down where he was and fight him. The challenge was accepted by some volunteers who went down as far as the forest where the hostile's tracks ended. They refused to go any farther knowing perfectly well what awaited them beyond the first fringe of trees.

While the volunteers vacillated, Chief John dismounted his warriors, aligned them in two ranks, one behind the other, soldier-style, and led them out of the forest. The volunteers were ordered to stand fast. The front rank was told to kneel; the rear rank to remain standing. When the advancing Indians were within range, a volley was poured into them. The savages melted away. Those not injured too badly in the first rank turned and broke through the second rank, which panicked also, and the entire force raced toward the trees.

Chief John led a second attack. This time just one long line of Indians. Walking towards the soldiers the chieftain continually exhorted his warriors not to break. They were the best—the last—of his fighting men.

When the volunteers fired their second fusilade, Indians went down by the dozens. A few escaped but not many. The

volunteers were in the act of mounting their horses to chase the remaining, reeling savages, when a squaw broke from the woods screaming at them.

Chief John had had enough. The squaw said he would surrender provided that he could keep his guns. The volunteers sent back a sizzling refusal to these terms, adding that unless John and his remaining warriors came out of the forest they were going in after them.

John then sent his son to parley. Could they keep half their guns? The same answer was sent back. John's son returned again asking if they could keep a third of their guns. The volunteers replied that unless the Indians came out of the woods immediately and threw down every gun they possessed, they would be attacked without delay. By then it was late in the day and shadows were appearing.

A few warriors emerged from the woods. They were not fired upon. They dropped their guns at the edge of the forest and walked towards the volunteers. More and more came out, threw aside their guns and surrendered. By nightfall there was a large number of Indians among the volunteers. The settlers then sent several bucks back into the woods with instructions that no more Indians were to cross over to them until the following day. .

By dawn the Indians began trickling out of the woods again. Those who appeared without arms were refused sanctuary; were told to go back, dig them up and bring them out. In this way all arms were accounted for.

The very last man to leave the trees was Chief John. He stalked to the edge of the trees, stopped and glared. Then he started forward and twice he threw his rifle to his shoulder, twice he lowered it. Finally he threw it down.

CHAPTER FOUR

Dissension, Blood and Maturity

OREGON had, by this time, of course, been separated from the Territory of Washington, northward. To legislative intents and purposes the two Territories were separate; in all other respects they remained contiguous: the Oregon Country.

Also, by this time, interior and northern tribesmen knew about the coastal Indian wars. In order to forestall their involvement, Joel Palmer proposed putting the Willamette tribesmen upon reservations east of their homeland—out of the path of trouble. The affected Indians protested, their main objection being that the Indians they were to be billeted among were too diseased to be associated with.

In an attempt to iron out differences, Indian Agent Doty called a council of interior tribes including various bands of Cayuses, Walla Wallas, and the loyal, friendly Nez Percés. The meeting was to be held in a time-honoured grove of trees where natives had held counsel for centuries. This was a few miles from deserted Waiilatpu.

When the meeting opened, Agent Doty presented Kamiakin with the customary presents. Kamiakin refused them saying he had never accepted from the Americans so much as a grain of wheat without paying for it, and there was nothing among the presents that he desired to buy.

At the council were forty-seven dragoons under Lieutenant Archibald Gracie. They were from The Dalles. Also present was Lieutenant Lawrence Kip.

Later, when the Nez Percés arrived, about twenty-five hundred strong, they had a big American flag in their vanguard.

This was planted where they intended to camp. The Cayuses, numbering not more than four hundred, stayed apart from both soldiers and Nez Percés. Some Cayuses sized up the Agent's bodyguard and found it wanting in impressiveness, a factor which was to contribute to what followed.

When the council was officially under way there were not less than five thousand Indians in or around the grove. There were not more than sixty white men among them. The Nez Percés, early and strong Christians, held during the council, daily church services, which all the whites attended.

Spokesmen for the government proposed that all the Indians go on to reservations and sell their homelands to the government. The government would, in return, supply and support the reservations, erect and maintain schools, teach Indians trades, and in general aid them in following the white man's road.

Chief Lawyer, an old man, still suffering from a wound in his side received years before in a fight with Blackfeet, grim and stern and fearless, agreed for the Nez Percés.

Young Chief of the Walla Walla said; "I wonder if the ground has anything to say? I wonder if the ground is listening to what is being said?" He meant the Indians had no right to sell land given them by the Great Spirit; land in which rested the bones of their ancestors; *Indian* land.

Others then argued that the tribes were not sufficiently represented by the bands present to give away land which all Indians owned. Several of the native spokesmen said they did not understand exactly what it was that they were selling or what the government was giving them in exchange.

When Joel Palmer asked Kamiakin what his thoughts were, the bitter war-leader replied: "I have nothing to say." The Indians then retired to talk among themselves. This lasted quite a while. On the 8th of June it was proposed that the Nez Percés be given a reservation separate from other Indians. Other concessions were made and finally all the leaders who were present capitulated, except the Walla Walla, who remained aloof and silent.

Just as the atmosphere was clearing, the great Nez Percé war-

leader Looking Glass arrived. He had been gone from the Northwest for three years, fighting and raiding the Blackfeet hereditary enemies of his people. When Looking Glass returned home and discovered where Lawyer was, he hurried to the council. Upon being informed that the pacts were agreed upon Looking Glass turned upon those with Lawyer and said: "My people, what have you done? You have sold my country!"

The council was disrupted. It was finally adjourned in order that the Nez Percés could iron out their private difficulties. This required three days. During this interim—on the 9th of June—Kamiakin and Peupeumoxmox went to the Indian Superintendent (and Governor of Washington Territory), ex-U.S. Army Major Isaac Stevens, they signed for the Walla Walla and the Yakimas, Kamiakin saying he would also sign for the Palouses of whom he claimed to be chieftain by descent.

The 10th of June was Sunday; nothing was done. The whites attended services at the Nez Percé camp and Looking Glass was friendly, to everyone's surprise. On the 11th, Lawyer responded to an appeal for a decision by going to the table and signing the treaty for the Nez Percés. Despite the seeming cordiality, there remained considerable dissention among the Indians. It is to Isaac Stevens' lasting credit that, although he knew exactly what was in the wind, he did not, by word or expression, betray his knowledge to either Indians or whites so long as success for the council was possible.

Among the Indians present at the grove, the Cayuses probably had less reason to love whites than any others. The memory of Tilaukit's defeat and ultimate hanging was still vivid among them. Remnants of his band were scattered among all the sub-tribes. A plot had been espoused by the Cayuses, in view of the numerical weakness of the whites, to massacre them all on the spot. The combined tribesmen were then to descend upon The Dalles and wipe out that settlement.

When Chief Lawyer of the Nez Percés was apprized of the plot, he not only told Isaac Stevens about it but had his personal tipi moved among the tents of the commissioners, by this act defying Cayuses and any others who were part of the plot, which

included dissidents among his own people. Lawyer knew that if he were among the whites when they were attacked he would also be killed, more than likely. If this occurred, the five thousand Nez Percés would seek immediate vengeance upon his slayers. Strong medicine.

The plot fell through. The balked chieftains were compelled to sign the treaties in order to put the best face forward. Of all these Kamiakin alone refused to sign.

Pending congressional ratification, the Walla Walla Treaty gave the Yakimas and Nez Percés two hundred thousand dollars apiece for their ceded lands. The Cayuses were to receive one hundred and fifty thousand dollars. None of the tribes had to move on to reservations for a year after the treaties were ratified and the government agreed to furnish and maintain schools, shops, *et al*, as Joel Palmer and Isaac Stevens had said. In addition, the Indians were to be reimbursed for all improvement upon ceded lands, at a fair price.

After the council, the Indians dispersed. Later, the Yakima leaders came together at Kamiakin's village, had a private counsel, and decided that they would resist any soldiers sent into their lands, regardless of purpose. In order to warn neighbouring settlers with whom they were on friendly terms, they agreed to send out riders asking these white people to go to places of safety. Any emigrants nearing the approaches of Yakimaland were to be told to go away or they would be attacked.

Not long after the decisions of this council were made known among the tribesmen, several travellers were caught near the Yakima River and killed. Leader of the Indians was Qualchin, son of Kamiakin's half brother, Chief Owhi.

A. J. Bolon, Yakima sub-agent, *en route* to see Governor Stevens in the Spokane country, altered his course so as to go by Kamiakin's village and inquire about the killings. Bolon was alone, being a friend of the Yakimas, of long standing. At the tip of Kamiakin's younger brother, Ice, with whom Bolon was on intimate terms, the sub-agent was advised to go back to leave the country; fast. Bolon took Ice's advice.

Returning, Bolon's trail was cut by three Yakima bucks

named Stokanchan, Wappiwapichlah, and Meicheil, the latter a son of Ice. Trailing the shod-horse sign of a white man, these three eventually caught up with Bolon, who knew them all. The little party then rode along for quite a distance in conversation, during which it was brought out that Agent Bolon was interested in Qualchin's murders. At this the warriors decided among themselves that Bolon must be killed. The opportunity came when the four men made camp. Bolon was warming himself at the fire when Wappiwapichlah approached him from the rear and locked his arms around the white man. Wappiwapichlah was large and muscular: Bolon couldn't move. Stokanchan then came around the fire and with one hand in Bolon's face pushed his head far back. With his other hand he cut the sub-agent's throat. The Indians then built up the fire and threw Bolon's body upon it, killed his horse, threw the saddle, bridle, and all the sub-agent's affects into the flames.

When Bolon didn't return and no word was received from him, the Indian agent at The Dalles, Nathan Olney, sent a friendly De Chute spy among the Yakima camps to ascertain what had happened.

When the spy returned and told Olney that Yakimas had murdered Bolon and were getting ready for the warpath; that Kamiakin himself had told the spy he meant to fight the Army and settlers for five years if he had to, Olney was really alarmed.

As the days slipped by the news became worse. The Cayuses and Walla Wallas had also joined the Yakimas in rebellion. Open hostility had been avowed toward all whites. Isaac Stevens was away but his acting-Governor, C. H. Mason—who was also Secretary of Washington Territory—sent an urgent appeal for military aid in the face of an imminent Indian uprising.

Major Granville Haller from The Dalles, with a howitzer and a hundred Regulars, and Lieutenant Slaughter from Fort Steilacoom, with fifty men, were sent on converging roads into the Yakima country. Haller was disinclined to believe that the Indians were hostile, as a tribe. He thought a few depredations had been committed and that Mason was over excited—it was always happening. Haller did not know the Walla Walla

Council had been repudiated by half its signatories. He marched straight into the heartland of Kamiakin's hostiles with one hundred Regulars—and a howitzer.

The hostiles had scouts out, of course, and were apprized of Haller's approach long in advance of an eventual meeting near The Dalles. The Indians were in a state of wildest excitement. Haller was attacked as soon as he came into sight. The first day of the battle, Kamiakin's people stood fast and forced the soldiers to seek shelter. The second day, Haller led repeated and fierce assaults which forced the hostiles to give away. Quite abruptly, a large number of the Indians quit the battlefield, mounted their horses and simply rode off.

When the tribesmen fell back, Haller's command was sufficiently encouraged to try a desperate assault designed to scatter them completely. It might have succeeded had not Qualchin arrived with reinforcements who were at once thrown into the battle. Haller was rolled back and, when nightfall came, his column had lost not only men, but most of its mules and provisions as well. The Indians feared that Haller might have poisoned his provisions, however, and, instead of eating them, burnt them all.

After nightfall, a De Chute Indian crawled past the Yakima guards and raced for The Dalles, seeking aid for Haller.

When the battle was resumed on the third day, the Regulars were compelled to take up a position on a hilltop where they were surrounded. On a smaller scale, occurred the same kind of disaster which was later to mark one of the high points in the Northwestern Indian wars.

After dusk of the third day's battling, Major Haller spiked his howitzer, buried it and, when the Indians withdrew hours later, led his men in a stealthy attempt to escape. It worked. The soldiers were not discovered to have escaped until dawn. Then their trail was taken up. Indians and soldiers were within shooting range of each other before late afternoon. They exchanged shots but the Regulars did not stop.

After Major Haller's escape, Qualchin was brought news of Lieutenant Slaughter's approach via Naches Pass. The war-

leader led his companions upcountry to intercept and turn back the fifty men under Slaughter. However, before finding the soldiers the Indians came upon a lone white man riding openly through the pass. They surrounded him. He turned out to be a trader named Edgar, married to a niece of Teias, one of Qualchin's uncles. When asked what he was doing in the pass, Edgar replied that he had been *en route* to the Yakima villages to warn them soldiers were coming. Qualchin doubted him but Teias didn't. The older man then told Edgar of Haller's defeat and suggested Edgar leave Indian country at once.

Edgar went back the way he had come and Qualchin and Teias had an argument. Qualchin wanted to kill the trader. Teias was adamantly in opposition. Edgar, meanwhile, rode straight to Slaughter's camp, for which he had been serving as scout, and told what he had learnt of Haller's fate. Slaughter withdrew. Later, when Qualchin discovered what had happened, he went to his uncle and demanded that Teias go back to Kittitas Valley where the rest of the old people were, and remain there until the end of the war. Teias went.

Major Haller then sent out an appeal for a thousand men. Oregon's Governor George Curry responded with four companies of volunteers and Acting Governor Mason of Washington Territory sent down two companies more. An additional three hundred and thirty-five Regulars were despatched from west of the Cascades. Volunteer companies were recruited among settlers in the Vancouver, Seattle, and Olympia areas. Mason appointed Major Rains of the Regulars to be Brigadier General of Territorial volunteers. Southward, Governor Curry then put in an urgent appeal for not less than eight additional companies, against the possibility that now, with Haller's defeat behind them, the Yakimas might prevail upon all Indians to revolt, form a confederacy of tribes in the Northwest country and start a full-fledged war. Jim Nesmith was appointed colonel of Oregon volunteers. As the several units came into being, similar ranks were apportioned among them.

In cold, damp October, at Union Gap, General Rains met the combined hostiles. Rains deployed his strong force, had the

howitzers brought up and, after a few rounds, the Indians withdrew in spite of their extensive earthwork fortifications. Rains did not order immediate pursuit and an impatient junior officer named Phil Sheridan took some civilian-soldiers in a sortie of the country round about. Nettled by jeers from warriors atop a little eminence, Sheridan led a howling charge up the hill, carried it and scattered the Indians without losses. General Rains then sent an order for the irregulars to withdraw. They were huddled around a comfortable fire when it came. Sheridan led the men back to the shivering, main column and the hostiles re-invested the hilltop, sat with their backs to Sheridan's fire and yelled taunts at the soldiers.

Kamiakin then called a council among the Indians. He told them that, since they could not hope to prevail against Rain's superior numbers—and howitzers—the bands should break up and scatter. This was done. The soldiers were left in possession of the country. They marched to a nearby Catholic mission and bivouacked. The priest, Father Pandosy, was a hostage with the Indians.

While in camp at the mission, volunteers found buried a keg of gunpowder and from this inferred that the mission fathers had been supplying Indians with ammunition. They destroyed the mission, burnt the buildings, shot and bayoneted the priest's pigs and dug up his potato patch. Then it began to snow and General Rains decided the campaign must close. He therefore headed for The Dalles.

The campaign had accomplished little beyond the routing of Kamiakin's forces at Union Gap and the sacking of the Catholic mission. Disgruntled settlers wanted to charge Rains with incompetence. General Wool refused to listen to charges made against an army officer by civilians. He then verbally lashed Rains for having anything to do with volunteer units which, he said, were unnecessary for the defence of the Northwest!

Governor Stevens, on the far side of Yakima country, had made some advantageous treaties with neutral natives and was ready to return. Obviously he couldn't return alone, so a com-

pany of volunteers was recruited to go after him. General Wool disbanded it and "General" Rains was outspokenly in disagreement with Wool over this. So, also, was Tom McKay, captain of the disbanded volunteers. Wool said Isaac Stevens could circle around eastward where General Harney was, in the Sioux country, or he could try getting home through Yakima country. Either alternative was a death warrant for Governor Stevens. To make the affair more interesting, Peupumoxmox promised to kill the governor if he returned through the hostiles' country. Into the breach went Oregon volunteers, without General Wool's sanction.

Chief Peupumoxmox then attacked Fort Walla Walla, which was deserted, plundered it and took all the powder, shot and provisions cached there. Settlers in the area were wiped out. The hostiles were estimated to be one thousand strong. Blood ran.

Lieutenant Colonel James Kelly was camped on the Umatilla River with six companies of volunteers. He was building a blockhouse which he named Fort Henrietta after Major Haller's wife, when the building was completed. Hearing from friendly Indians of Peupumoxmox's attack upon Walla Walla, Kelley marched there and found the place a shambles with a broad Indian trail leading away from it. He took up this trail and, quite unexpectedly, Peupumoxmox appeared with a white flag. Kelley wasn't Rains. As soon as Peupumoxmox was within his camp he gave the hostile leader a choice of returning to his warriors with Kelley's men for companions, or of remaining in camp with his bodyguard of six warriors as a hostage until his people surrendered unconditionally. Peupumoxmox chose to stay. Kelley then released one of the chieftain's companions with an ultimatum which the Indians ignored. When Kelley sent a flag of truce out the following day, urging the hostiles to come in and parley, the messengers were turned back under threats. Kelley then took his hostages and command to the mouth of Touchet creek where there was a needed cache of provisions.

When, afterwards, he started toward Waiilatpu, Peupumoxmox's warriors approached the column as close as they dared and indulged in sniping. Sub-agent Olney who was with the

volunteers and knew the country, guided the troops past ambushing points. Indians appeared in bolder numbers as the command approached Waiilatpu. When they were finally numerically superior they began a running fight which developed into a *melée*.

At a scattered clutch of cabins called French Town, the Indians got in among the houses and were especially troublesome. An old howitzer was found at gutted Walla Walla which, when fired, scattered the Indians but also burst its barrel and badly wounded volunteer Captain Wilson.

Colonel Kelley had his hands full. Losses on that first day included two of his best officers. *Peuquemoxmox* added to his tribulations by shouting to his warriors where to attack the men whose prisoner he was. Kelley ultimately ordered the chieftain and his companions to be bound and thrown upon the ground. He ordered the men detailed to this chore to kill any of the hostages who gave trouble. It is said that then one of the hostages drew a knife and severely slashed one of the volunteers. The Indian was instantly killed. *Peuquemoxmox* then, allegedly, leapt at another volunteer seeking to wrest the man's gun away. The volunteer swung his musket like an axe and caught the chieftain squarely over the head with it, killing him. The remaining hostages were then shot. In their fury the volunteers scalped *Peuquemoxmox* and cut his ears off. Later, there was slight unpleasantness over this.

When the attacking Indians drew off at the approach of nightfall, Kelley's men made supper fires. These were promptly rendered unsafe, for by the light the Indians could see to shoot at volunteers.

The following dawn, the Indians attacked furiously, forcing the volunteers to give ground. The soldiers fought on empty stomachs; their breakfast had been interrupted by the attack. A charge dislodged a band of hostile riflemen from a cover of brush and trees but when the volunteers fell back to their camp at the close of the second day the Indians reclaimed their copse. When the third day dawned, it was discovered the natives had felled trees and made a sort of *abatis*. The volunteers tried un-

successfully to dislodge them. Colonel Kelley then divided his command, sending two companies in a headlong charge upon the abatis while two other companies struck the works right and left in an enfilading manoeuvre. Under this determined assault, the hostiles were routed. Then, while the foe was discomfited, Kelley led a further charge into the forest beyond the abatis, where the Indians were re-forming, and completely routed them. On this spot, the volunteers built Fort Bennett, and, farther off, in official Oregon, Colonel Jim Nesmith resigned and Thomas Cornelius was appointed to succeed him.

The battle of French Town—or Fort Bennett—was a decisive victory for the volunteers. In open combat, out-numbered and lacking the advantage of cover, they had met, fought and beaten *Peupeumoxmox*'s numerically superior warriors. The Indians said later that *Peupeumoxmox*'s death demoralised them. This hardly seems credible. They fought long after *Peupeumoxmox* was killed. Furthermore, it can be doubted that, in the bedlam and smoke, they knew *Peupeumoxmox* was dead.

Notwithstanding all this, *Peupeumoxmox*'s hostiles had been whipped. This was a severe blow to *Kamiakin*, who immediately sent emissaries to the *Couer d'Alencs* and *Spokans* for more warriors.

Two things contributed to *Kamiakin*'s failure here. One, *Issac Stevens* entered the neutrals' country while *Kamiakin*'s ambassadors were there proselytizing. Two, Chief *Garry*, educated by the whites, with definite sympathies towards them, was reluctant to give approval for even a few bands of *Spokan* hot-bloods to join in *Kamiakin*'s rebellion.

An old sore was aggravated when a visiting *Shoshone* chief-tain said to *Stevens*: "When you stopped the traders from selling ammunition you stabbed our hearts. We don't know what to make of it. We are not *Blackfeet*." His meaning was that the *Shoshons* (or *Snakes*), were not troublesome—somewhat of an understatement. If there was a comparison between *Shoshonis* and *Blackfeet*, it might have been said that the *Blackfeet* fought more openly and employed less stealth and cunning than did the *Snakes*.

But the Indian had a point. Guns were the most prized possessions of all natives. To deprive them of the means to hunt and fight, in the way they chose to do these things, could not be expected to inspire them toward confidence and sympathy for whites.

Garry Spokane said: "All these things we have been speaking of had better be tied together as they are like a bundle of sticks because you are in a hurry. There is no time to talk of them. But afterwards you can come back, when you find time, and see us". Garry was seeking a way to end the Governor's visit without committing himself either to peace or war. Internal tribal pressures were fierce. Garry, more than most Indians, knew the strength of the whites. But he didn't want to awaken some morning with his throat cut, either. He wanted at all costs to avoid arousing the antagonism of the whites, through Stevens. Likewise he wanted to avoid Indian animosity, if possible. These things he managed to do for the time being, anyway. His confusion would be lifelong.

A ray of light in the darkness was the Nez Percés. Strong and respected by other tribesmen, they remained firm in their friendship and loyalty to the whites. There were small bands of Nez Percé dissidents, it is true, but these were never strong enough to influence tribal thinking or cause serious trouble to the whites, which was fortunate. Had the Nez Percés joined an alliance of redmen, conquest of the Northwest would have been indefinitely prolonged and unquestionably different in other ways. Nez Percés were superior horsemen, vastly intelligent tacticians, and among the bravest of warriors. They would live to regret their choice of champions.

Another winter campaign was proposed. It resulted in a march of Oregon volunteers across the Snake river, over the plains as far as White Bluffs on the Columbia River, and return. Beyond finding a few villages, destroying these and running off some Indian horses and cattle, and having their own stock stampeded a time or two, nothing much was accomplished. Lack of forage caused a number of horses to starve to death.

In the Spring things picked up. Colonel Cornelius marched

down the Columbia on the north side and James Kelley on the south side. Both moved toward Fort Henrietta, sweeping the vicinity clean of hostiles. Cornelius then went up the Columbia as far as Status Creek and bumped into three hundred Yakimas under grim Kamiakin. Volunteer Captain Hembree was killed. The hostiles attacked with marked vigour. Cornelius's command fought to gain some natural ramparts, which kept the Indians from flanking and getting above them. During this fight, Kamiakin was seen to signal his orders with a square black flag; the first known instance of Indians using the semaphore system of communication in battle.

The Yakimas made a decisive strike when they managed to stampede Cornelius's horses. Afoot, the soldiers were unable to pursue the Yakimas when they withdrew. The Indians managed to swim about fifty head of Cornelius's horses across the ram-paging Columbia. On that note ended the first scrimmage of the new year.

In February, prior to this battle, Isaac Stevens began sending reports to Secretary of War Jefferson Davis about General Wool's attitude toward conditions in the Northwest. Davis, never noted for an open mind, required something more than letters whose essence was a certain personal asperity, to convince him of the situation's seriousness. Moreover, at this time conditions in the States, which were eventually to lead Jefferson Davis into history as titular head of a rebellion, claimed all of his attention. The Northwest was remote, a thorn in the national flesh more irritating than critical. What would be required to jar Davis out of his passiveness wasn't long coming.

The Cascades presented an exceptionally vulnerable link in the defensive chain gradually being strung along the waterways of the Oregon country. Because of the magnificent falls there, it was impossible further to transport Army supplies by water. Often the facilities for packing equipment and supplies overland to points of ultimate delivery were slow or didn't arrive at all. Naturally, this created quite a storage problem at the Cascades settlement. Just as naturally, Indians were drawn to the piles of supplies like flies to honey.

There was a little blockhouse mid-way between the upper and lower scattering of cabins at the settlement. Two small river boats were tied up nearby after unloading their cargoes. The Cascade Indians weren't strong enough to be dangerous. Except for thievery they weren't particularly troublesome.

All in all, this situation was tailored for Kamiakin, whose warriors badly needed the guns and ammunition, among other things, which were thinly guarded near the blockhouse. He therefore chose thirty of his best Yakima warriors to lead an assault upon the settlement. To accompany these bucks were another thirty or so of their Klickitat allies. Between the two groups they had little difficulty in persuading the Cascade Indians to join them.

Kamiakin's plan was simplicity itself. The sixty Yakimas and Klickitats, with as many Cascades as showed up, were to spearhead the attack. Kamiakin with the rest of his force would come up and support them. Both upper and lower sections of the village were to be attacked simultaneously. The blockhouse was to be attacked by warriors specially chosen. The two little steamers at the dock were to be captured and neutralised before they could get up steam. If the settlers were struck hard enough by the first war-party they would be staggering when Kamiakin arrived with the main force. Combined, the hostile units would then utterly destroy the settlement and get all the guns, ammunition and supplies.

In residence at the Cascades settlement was Colonel Wright who was totally unsuspecting. He had orders from General Wool to march to Walla Walla and erect a fort there. Wright detailed a token force to guard the settlement and struck out for Walla Walla. Shortly after Wright's departure a shuffling of commands at Steilacoom, Vancouver, and the Cascades, left the latter village with exactly nine Regulars to garrison the blockhouse, otherwise to patrol and to maintain peace in the settlement. As soon as this intelligence was carried to Kamiakin, he ordered his assault troops to attack.

The Indians, instead of capturing both steamers, were held at bay by pistol fire until the *Mary* could be stoked, backed

away from the wharf and be got under way. (All this time the pilot lay flat on the floor, steering by memory, bullets shredding the cabin overhead.) The *Mary* blew a defiant blast from her whistle when in mid-stream and went lumbering off after help.

In the settlement, several whites were killed by the first rush of hostiles, but the gunfire and the yelling of the attackers, sent many others scurrying toward Bradford's Store, conveniently close and built of logs. The building was two storeys high. An oversight on the part of its builder had placed the communicating stairway between the lower and upper storeys of the place on the outside.

When the Indians rushed up, Jim Sinclair peeked out and was shot through the head. A woman, last of those to get inside, leapt over Sinclair's body and someone barred the door behind her. The besieged used loopholes to hold the natives at bay while within the building the stovepipe was removed, the hole enlarged and a ladder set up, enabling the defenders to get upstairs where they commanded a better view of the area. Hostiles were quickly routed from the building's immediate vicinity. They then shot fire-arrows onto the roof. From a cut-bank at the rear of the building, overlooking the river, other savages hurled firebrands and pieces of pitch-pine, to reach which the defenders chopped holes through the roof before a fire could be started. Later, they improvised hooked poles for this purpose, eliminating the danger in that way.

Close to the river, the white people were nevertheless cut off from drinking water. The store had a supply of "medicinal liquor" which sparked the ardour of the riflemen more than it quenched their thirst. Later, after dark, dead Jim Sinclair's adopted Indian boy slipped out with a bucket, made repeated trips to the river and managed to fill a cask with water.

To prevent escape of the besieged whites, hostiles fired some cabins near the store, thus lighting up the area. Upriver, the blockhouse's nine soldiers and a handful of settlers fared better by reason of their howitzer.

After dark, the Indians withdrew and made the night ring with their howls and plundering. The second day they resumed

the attack but a temptation, to acquire much-needed goods from the piles of army stores, overcame the majority of them who plundered to their heart's content. Unquestionably, this saved the defenders in their various fortified-up positions from eventual extinction; possibly was even more important than the belated arrival of the *Mary* with two hundred and fifty men aboard. Another little ship also arrived, under the command of Colonel Wright. When word of the arrival of the boats was received by the Indians, they rounded up their effectives, went down and lined up on the riverbank. One of the steamers hung up temporarily on a bar and the Indians fired a volley into her which was returned with sufficient accuracy to make the Indians withdraw. They returned to the ransacked supplies, lingered awhile, then straggled up toward the blockhouse.

Upon landing, Colonel Wright sent Lieutenant Colonel Edward J. Steptoe with a howitzer, dragoons, and two companies of infantrymen, to seek and engage the enemy, who by then were digging in for a show-down battle farther upriver.

Later, young Lieutenant Phil Sheridan arrived with forty more dragoons from Fort Vancouver. With him, Sheridan lugged a little iron cannon he'd borrowed from a steamer captain at Vancouver. Carrying solid shot for the gun was considerable trouble. Sheridan did not know when he borrowed the cannon that Wright and Edward Steptoe, with howitzers, were already due to arrive at Cascades.

By the time Sheridan arrived Steptoe's scouts had ascertained that the hostiles were in a very strong defensive position upon a narrow split of land which could only be approached frontally. Sheridan and a small party of dragoons rode out to sortie. An Indian sniper fired at the lieutenant. The ball grazed Sheridan's nose and plowed through the brain of the man beside him. Sheridan then had the little cannon brought up with its solid shot. The closest hostiles were driven off by it.

The way Kamiakin had disposed his force cut the lower settlement off from the upper settlement and the blockhouse. The army's natural desire after liberating the defenders at Bradford's Store was to push on and aid those above the block-

house, within or beyond, Indian lines. But anyone attempting to get close was turned back by Indian gunfire. While this *impasse* was in progress Lieutenant Sheridan crossed the river on a commandeered raft with several of his men, seeking a point of reconnaissance from which to study the surrounding countryside. His crossing and subsequent scouting were not discovered by the Indians. Sheridan climbed a nearby hill and discovered why he hadn't been detected. The Indians were holding horse races, matching their own stock against captured animals!

En route back to the other side of the river, Sheridan kept a small island between himself and, possibly, lurking Indians. When he stepped ashore on the island he was astonished to find it filled with squaws, evidently hiding there to avoid being injured when, and if, fighting started. Sheridan rounded up the women, put them ashore on the far bank of the river, gave them a tow rope and encouraged them to pull his raft upriver beyond the blockhouse. When he was close enough the squaws were released and he then led his men hurriedly through the tangle of reeds and trees toward the hostiles' rear. At this precise moment Colonel Steptoe's column approached the open country below the blockhouse and some damned fool blew a bugle. The Indians leapt up and fled before Sheridan had succeeded in flanking them. Some disappeared among the trees, others swam for the island in the river; others scattered to the four winds. In minutes there wasn't an Indian in sight anywhere.

Meanwhile, back at the settlement, additional volunteers had arrived. When they heard the hostiles had escaped they nearly precipitated another fight by accusing the Army of bungling.

Colonel Steptoe ordered Lieutenant Sheridan to the island in the river after the fugitives. When he stepped ashore the Indians surrendered. He had them lined up and berated them through an interpreter for their treachery. Mostly they were local Cascades, whose spokesman immediately laid the blame upon the Yakimas. Sheridan then walked down their line sticking fingers into Indian gunbarrels. He showed the powderstains to the natives, then ordered them to be disarmed and returned to the mainland, where, thirteen were identified by witnesses as

participants in the attack. Colonel Wright had all thirteen headmen tried on the spot. Nine were convicted of armed rebellion and hanged to a tree; the balance were sent to Fort Vancouver as military prisoners. Wright then detached a strong force for garrison duty from his command, ordered more block-houses to be constructed, and, after a short rest, started for The Dalles. From there he struck out straight into the Yakima country in pursuit of the vanished marauders.

Hostiles repeatedly harassed Wright's command but did not offer any concerted opposition to its march through their country. It was the Indians' fishing season. The majority of them were busily engaged in acquiring what constituted a staple of their winter diet; dried, smoked fish.

Kamiakin spent weeks attempting to stiffen Yakima resistance to Wright, to no avail. The band chieftains sent raiding parties against the invaders but would not accede to Kamiakin's demands for a decisive battle. Finally, in disgust, implacable old Kamiakin fled to the Palouse country.

Wright concluded a few minor treaties with savages he came across. Most important of these was the capitulation of Chief Owhi, a pact entered into on the Indian's part for reasons of expediency. Chief Moses likewise agreed to cease warring for the same reasons as Owhi's, and with the same results. When winter provisions were laid by, the warpath beckoned again and both chieftains took it. By then, Wright was no longer in the country.

Up north, Chief Seattle, an interesting Indian who exacted tribute from the village named after him, led an expedition to destroy the village. Some say that Seattle's daughter, Angeline, warned the settlers. The credit is variously ascribed to different natives. Regardless, the American sloop-of-war *Decatur* was anchored in Seattle harbour when the Indians attacked. In what is probably the only instance of the American Navy fighting Indians, the *Decatur's* commanding officer directed that shells be lobbed beyond the town, into the Indians' lines. This was done with sufficient accuracy to scatter the attackers. Indian retaliation was limited to musket fire. The siege lasted

all night long. With Seattle were chieftains Leshi and Coquilton. A third war-leader was reported to be the unregenerate Owhi. If so, Kamiakin's shadow was over the warriors, for Owhi, apart from being one of Kamiakin's most enthusiastic followers, was also his brother.

The battle was ended, finally, by the Navy's big guns. Seattle, the town in Washington Territory, was relieved. Seattle, the Indian leader, withdrew.

There were other battles, some of which were decisive, all contributing to the Conquest's bloody chapters. Despite General Wool's abhorrence of volunteers it was these settler-soldiers far more than the Regulars who struggled to achieve peace. Down south, Regulars marched beside volunteer units, co-operated with them in all instances in the face of a common peril, and slowly, as the Army's power increased, the settlers were enabled to go home, to farms, stores and mines, leaving the field largely to the Army.

The Conquest's "peculiar institution" was a bounty system. Twenty dollars was paid for the head of a common warrior, higher rates for heads belonging to war-leaders and chieftains. Near Fort Bellingham (commanded by Captain George E. Pickett who would achieve sad immortality at Gettysburg years later), lived a chieftain named Patkanim who did a thriving business in commercial head-hunting. When hostilities slackened, warriors either surrendered or went southward; Patkanim continued to bring in heads. Puzzled, the whites began a quiet investigation; if the Army couldn't find fugitives, how could Patkanim? He didn't. Relying on the fact that whites didn't know one Indian tribe from another, Patkanim brought in heads belonging to friendly, reservation, travelling Indians. He was even collecting bounties upon heads taken from his own people.

During the Conquest, blockhouses proved effective in repelling attacks. As time went on, settlers were urged to build them wherever three or more families lived. This policy was followed by Regulars as well as settlers and during the course of the Conquest no less than seven stockades were erected by Regulars, twenty-three by settlers; the various volunteer outfits

built another thirty-five. This string of forts made it possible, given ample warning, for the white people to reach a blockhouse before being massacred by marauders.

So, aside from blockhouses, the Indians were faced with the realization that the Army was becoming more powerful, the white tide more overwhelming. If they were to survive, to keep even the hinterlands of their country, there was must one way to do it. They must form a confederation of tribesmen. Accordingly, old fox Kamiakin sent emissaries among the Indians southward, and west of the Cascades, with a proposal along these lines. As previously stated, Northwestern Indians were not so antagonistic toward one another that hatred hampered vision. All knew that the whites were powerful and growing more powerful every year. If they were to be checked at all at this late date, the combined strengths of all tribes would be required. Many tribesmen had formed local alliances and were eager to be absorbed into a major alliance. Kamiakin's ambassadors found little opposition. Giving them additional backing was the government's policy of no-ammunition to Indians. As if this wasn't enough, there were the everlasting hangings, especially repulsive to Indians.

The no-ammunition policy's stringency had other effects, too. A good example would be that of the loyal and friendly Nez Percés. Surrounded as their country was by hostiles and potential hostiles, they needed arms to protect their domains and their lives. They were not popular with dissidents for their unswerving loyalty to the whites. With limited arms and very little ammunition, they were indeed in a precarious position. Had they been a little less renowned as warriors, also smaller in numbers, they would have been wiped out by the belligerents.

Colonel Wright wrote Isaac Stevens that he did not intend to go to Walla Walla with his depleted forces and erect a fort there because the Indians were unfriendly. Nez Percé Agent Craig wrote from Lapwai that he thought all northern, Columbia River Indians were forming an inter-tribal confederacy, which included Palouses, Yakimas, Cayuses, Snakes, and small bands from all the other tribes. In the midst of this

country, surrounded by the belligerents, were his unarmed Nez Percés who were constantly being taunted by the dissidents and warned that they would be massacred or driven out of their country for friendliness with the whites.

A brush occurred when some Spokans entered Nez Percé territory, and were met by warriors under Lawyer who had been trained by the Army as a volunteer unit. The Spokans said they wanted to cross the Clearwater and Lawyer refused to allow them to do so. The Spokans withdrew but a worried Agent Craig bade the Nez Percés move to their Salmon River country, which was off the hostiles' route. This angered the Nez Percés; they had never run from Spokans before, and didn't want to do so now. It was lack of arms and ammunition more than Craig's urgings which eventually prevailed against hot tempers. They moved.

The hostiles never seemed to be troubled by a shortage of guns and bullets. This irked the Nez Percés considerably, also. Among the more disgruntled at their councils, it was said the United States did not stand behind its allies. (It is strange, that the first time this was to be said it was American Indians who said it.) Small, dissatisfied factions of Nez Percés went over to the hostiles. For the balance of the Northwest Conquest these would turn up to the chagrin of their fellow tribesmen, arrayed against both whites and their relatives.

Agent Craig and sixty Nez Percés made rendezvous with volunteer officers at Walla Walla. The combined commands then marched to Grande Ronde where hostiles were encountered and a battle fought. The hostiles were soundly beaten, their provisions appropriated, a large cache of ammunition discovered, and more than two hundred horses captured. When news of this disaster was taken *via* moccasin telegraph to other hostiles it put the Nez Percé allies in even more danger.

While the Indians were threatening one another, Isaac Stevens decided it was opportune to call a council. Indians of all tribes and factions were invited to Walla Walla. Troops on hand were drawn from the volunteer units which had been present at the Grande Ronde fight. It was subsequently learnt that Colonel Wright had sent Lieutenant Colonel Edward

Steptoe toward Walla Walla. The volunteers, except for Goff's company, were then released. The council was under way when word was brought to Stevens that, instead of joining him at Walla Walla, Colonel Steptoe had gone into camp six or eight miles southward; had, in fact, refused to detach any Regulars from his command for patrol duty at the council site. Those of the volunteers still in the neighbourhood were then re-called.

The Spokans refused to have anything to do with the council but De Chute, several bands of Cayuses, and some Umatillas, arrived and bivouacked near the Nez Percés under Spotted Eagle. Catholic Father Ravalli arrived next with discouraging intelligence that Kamiakin, Owhi, Qualchin, and Skloom of the Yakimas, would not be in. He also brought word that the Nez Percés's strong man, Looking Glass, refused to attend. Notwithstanding, indomitable Isaac Stevens went ahead, although chances of achieving much were slight.

The Indians were sullen. They did not lay aside their arms when attending the meetings. Several headmen stated they were willing to fight and wished to do so. Finally, they began holding council among themselves, excluding the white men. The mood of the council was decidedly contrary to Isaac Stevens' expectations. Tension wasn't alleviated when the poorly-armed but numerous Nez Percés were threatened with extinction for their part in the Grande Ronde fight. In defiance, the Nez Percés retired to their own camp, dressed for war, and on the second night of the meeting held a war dance which lasted all night long.

Colonel Steptoe, informed of how the council was going, sent word to Stevens suggesting that he move the council closer to Steptoe's camp. This Stevens did without delay. While *en route* the noisy council group was met by a strong war party under Kamiakin himself. Owhi and Qualchin were with the hostiles. The closeness of Steptoe's force undoubtedly deterred an attack. The Nez Percés, still dressed for, and worked up to, fighting pitch, went out ahead and met Kamiakin. While the hostiles' units faced one another the balance of the council straggled past. However, that night in camp word spread that

Kamiakin intended to attack. The Nez Percés added to the general jitteriness by beating their big war drum all night long. They also detailed armed guards to patrol the camp, watch for hostiles. Scantly armed, they were numerically powerful.

So far as the peace council was concerned it was a farce. With Kamiakin's grim presence near, the hostiles became more intractable than ever. They openly threatened to attack the peace commissioners and their escort of volunteers. They were particularly arrogant toward Nez Percés, and in the end, since Colonel Steptoe would not or could not interfere, Stevens had no choice but to close the council, which he did.

The Indians then went down to Steptoe's bivouac, were invited to parley and were told the colonel was not in their country to fight them but to stay among them in peace. Steptoe's attitude, plus the failure of Stevens' council had an unfortunate aftermath. The Indians, believing Steptoe would not interfere, attacked Stevens' party within three miles of the council grounds. To be on the safe side they sent a party back to burn the grass around Steptoe's bivouac. This was supposed to cut Steptoe off in the event he heard the battle in progress and felt moved to aid Stevens.

Stevens had anticipated the fight too many days not to be prepared for it. He kept his party moving, preventing in this way a surround, a pitched battle where the advantage lay with the hostiles. Seeing they were not winning the running fight, the dissidents sent a courier to the Nez Percés saying that unless they deserted the white man their women and children would be killed. Stevens immediately told the allies to go and protect their families; they left. The fight was then intensified. Once, volunteer Captain Shaw was cut off from the main group by not less than two hundred and fifty hostiles. Shaw had exactly two dozen white men with him. With these he hacked and shot his way through Kamiakin's attackers and rejoined Stevens.

At nightfall, Stevens sent word to Steptoe that ". . . a company of his troops would be of service". Steptoe, no longer so pacific after nearly having his camp destroyed, sent word back

for Stevens to retrace his steps so that the forces could unite without one having to chase after the other, with Indians in between. This was done, the commands united, and Kamiakin, in a rage because Steptoe hadn't kept his word, hurled a fierce assault upon Steptoe's column. This was smashed with howitzer fire.

Reinforcements then arrived for Kamiakin and Colonel Steptoe took time out to write Colonel Wright. ". . . In my judgement we are reduced to the necessity of waging a vigorous war." The howitzer kept the hostiles at a distance while both parties moved down toward The Dalles. When they arrived with their casualties and the Indians withdrew, Isaac Stevens left for his capitol.

General Wool then wrote Washington that Stevens had called the Walla Walla Council for the sole and express purpose of starting an Indian war. He ordered Wright and Steptoe to Walla Walla for another, purely military, council with the Indians. The bands which still remained in the neighbourhood came in; the most important factions were "out". To those attending, Colonel Wright said that past differences should be forgotten, old treaties ignored, and ". . . the General trusts you will be on your guard against the whites . . ."

Steptoe was subsequently left to garrison Walla Walla. He eventually built a fort there, or at least started one. He also circularised an order from General Wool's headquarters prohibiting whites from settling in the Indians' country thereabouts. Isaac Stevens immediately wrote the Secretary of the Interior protesting Wool's exclusion act and even Lieutenant Colonel Steptoe suggested to Wool that a "good, industrious colony" be permitted to settle the inland country. Wool's reply was that the entire Walla Walla country was a natural reservation for Indians, with the Cascade mountains forming a most effective buffer between the races.

Wool supported this view by offering to newspapers in the east his ideas on the Oregon country. When an engineering officer condemned the Northwest as unfit for anything but Indians, Wool endorsed the report and forwarded it to the

Secretary of War, as follows:

"Oregon from the Pacific to the summit of the Rockies, (is) a region only fit, as a general rule, for the occupancy of the nomadic tribes who now roam it, and who should be allowed peacefully to remain in its possession . . . In the acquisition of this strip of territory the United States realized from Great Britain but very little that is at all valuable or useful to civilized man."

But in 1857 Isaac Stevens, Wool's ardent enemy, was elected Delegate to Congress from Washington Territory, and Nesmith was appointed Superintendent of Indian Affairs for both Territories, Oregon and Washington. Territorial resistance to the Army's and the government's policies of indifference and interference was immediately stiffened.

The first blow came when John Floyd, Secretary of War, took exception to Wool's views of the Oregon country. This in turn invited an investigation of the general's methods of conducting Army business in the Northwest. Wool was recalled when, in conjunction with the investigation and Floyd's critique, a petition arrived from Oregon's legislature demanding Wool's recall and replacement.

The year 1857 drew to a close with both sides, red and white, as implacable as ever. The dissention which existed for the whites was resolved by the removal of General Wool, and his replacement by General Newman S. Clarke, who assumed his duties at Headquarters, Department of the Pacific, in June, '57. Clarke spent the summer acquainting himself with conditions, men and situations, by making a personal tour of the country.

He met Jim Nesmith at The Dalles. The two men sat down without the antagonism which had marked Wool's interviews with civilians. Out of this meeting came several conclusions. One: fearful that retaliation against all Indians over the murder of Agent Bolon—almost two years earlier—was behind the Army's course of action, the hostiles were determined to resist. Two: there were objectionable features to Isaac Stevens' Walla Walla council held in 1855. Lastly, the deep and abiding hatred with which Indians and settlers regarded one another was kept alive by the fact that the two races were constantly in

association with one another. A fact which was thought to be remediable only if Indians were reservationed, their reserves made out-of-bounds for whites and the boundary lines held inviolable by law and the Army.

By Fall, 1857, General Clarke, cognizant of conditions, "determined not to destroy the future influence of the government with these people (Indians) by bad faith . . ." He had this viewpoint circularized among soldiers, civilians and emigrants—even among the Indians themselves. Had the *status quo* been static there is a possibility Clarke's forthrightness might have ended the friction, but that same tide of empire which had been steadily increasing was now flowing with a constancy not to dwindle for a decade; newcomers were not likely to consider a savage's rights above their own. Coupled to this was the fact that hardly a single Indian treaty had been ratified by Congress. The Indians hadn't received the monies or goods promised them. Additionally, because the treaties were not yet legally in force, Indians retained ceded lands. Settlers ignored Indian rights, insisted upon taking up land within supposedly ceded territories. The Indians protested this.

Moreover, various departments of government which had interests in the west had travelling representatives who went among the natives saying things which were generally contradictory, often downright contrary and antagonistic to the policies of the Army, Territorial legislatures, and even the individual policies of settlements themselves.

It turned out, then, that General Clarke didn't have a clear-cut case of war or peace at all. He had problems of conflicting interests as great, as confusing, as thoroughly snarled as any an army officer was ever faced with. To add an old thorn to those irritating the flesh of cohabitation, Wool's order prohibiting settlement in the Walla Walla country was still being enforced by the Army. This was denounced again by the Legislature, which most certainly wanted settlers, lots of them, and was articulately indignant over the Army's interference in civilian, Territorial affairs. So indignant was it in fact, that the following resolution was proposed, passed, and forwarded to

the national capitol:

"Joint resolutions, relative to citizens and settlers in Walla Walla country being driven from their homes and claims by the military authority of Washington Territory.

Whereas certain officers of the United States army, commanding in the county of Walla Walla, have unlawfully assumed to issue orders prohibiting citizens of this Territory from settling in certain portions thereof, and in accordance with said orders have driven citizens and settlers from their claims and homes acquired under the laws of the United States, to their great injury.

Therefore be it resolved by the legislative assembly of the Territory of Washington that, in our opinion, the said orders are without authority of law, and that the acts done under said orders are a high handed outrage upon the rights and liberties of the American people.

Resolved, That the Governor be requested to give the proper authorities at Washington all necessary information on the subject of the outrageous usurpation of the military over civil authority.

Resolved, That we believe the above usurpation to be the very worst form of martial law, proclaimed by tyrants not having feelings in common with us, nor identified with ours.

Resolved, That a copy of the above resolutions be forwarded to our delegate in Congress, and that he be requested to present the matter to the proper department in Washington city, to the end that the evil be corrected.

Passed January, 15, 1858.

J. S. VANCE, *Speaker House Representatives.*

C. C. PAGETT, *President of the Council."*

In due course of time a copy of these resolutions was sent back down the chain of command from the War Department, to General Clarke, along with a demand that he explain their meaning. Less than a month later—on the 3rd of February—Clarke learnt that R. H. Lansdale, newly appointed Agent to the Yakimas, had arrived in the country and was demanding the surrender of Agent Bolon's murderers. This stirred up another hornet's nest. Major Garnett of the 9th Infantry, at Fort Simcoe in Washington Territory, wrote very bluntly t at,

"I think it probable that the Indians will refuse to deliver up the murderers . . . I shall consider it my duty to decline acceding to Mr. Lansdale's requisition."

General Clarke, being swept deeper into the vortex, sought another meeting with Superintendent Nesmith. If the murderers of Bolon were demanded there would be another Indian war; if they were forgiven and allowed to run free, the life of white people would be forfeit. Complete forgiveness was completely out of the question. General Clarke, after his visit with Jim Nesmith, sent an urgent request for instructions to the War Department.

Quite unexpected trouble came from a new quarter. The so-called Mormon War was about to erupt into the fiasco it became. It was alleged that the Saints were inciting Shoshones, Piutes, and other Indians, including those of the Pacific Northwest, against the central government. From as far removed as the Headquarters of the Commanding General in New Mexico Territory, General Garland wrote Clarke that a "Mormon-Indian" complete with baptismal certificate from the church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints was attempting to arouse the Utahs and Navajoes to join the Mormons in a war against the United States.

Of course, the Shoshonis, along Mormondom's western boundaries, were in contact with Oregon-country Indians. That the Northwestern natives were influenced is indicated by the following extract from General Clarke's letter to the Army's Commanding General, dated January 1, 1858: "A private letter from Captain Kirkham . . . from Walla Walla says: 'We have received from the Indians news from Salt Lake: they report an engagement between our troops and the Mormons, the information comes through the Snakes, who are in direct communication with the Mormons.'

"The Snakes tell our Indians that they are well supplied with ammunition, and that they can get from the Mormons any quantity that they wish; and they further tell our Indians that the Mormons are anxious to supply them, to-wit: the Nez Percés, the Cayuses, and the Walla Walla, with everything they

wish. I would not be surprised if the Mormon influence should extend to all the tribes in our neighbourhood, and if they were determined to fight we may have trouble among the Indians on the coast again."

Another extract from a letter, this time written by one George Gibbs of Washington Territory, and dated November 27th, said: "A very curious statement was recently made by some of the Indians near Steilacoom. They said that the Klickitats had told them that Choosuklee (Jesus Christ) had recently appeared on the other side of the mountains: that he was after a while coming here, when the whites would be sent out of the country, and all would be well for themselves. It needed only a little reflection to connect this second advent with the visit of Brigham Young to the Flathead and Nez Percé's country."

General Clarke, obviously alarmed over the implications of these rumours, continued in his own letter: "If these things are true, and I credit them, temporary success on the part of the Mormons may be a signal for an Indian war extending along our whole frontier."

In line with his fear, Clarke sent Lieutenant Colonel Steptoe an order to keep careful watch for hostile activities in his area from either Indians or Mormons. He thought it possible the latter might move, or be driven into, the Northwest. Steptoe replied that he thought it advisable to send a friendly spy into the country of Indians likely to take up the war-path again, now that snow was melting and horse forage was once more available. He further stated that he was going to make a reconnaissance toward Fort Boise, beyond which lay the Mormon capital of Salt Lake City.

Steptoe, at Walla Walla, of which he built the major portion in the winter of 1856, put his command into shape for the field. When he had co-ordinated the information brought in by Indian spies, there appeared to be ample reason for alarm. He forwarded the following letter to his general:

"Fort Walla Walla, April 17, 1858.

Sir: There appear to be so much excitement amongst the Pelouse and Spokane Indians as to make an expedition to the north advisable,

if not necessary; I shall accordingly start with three companies of dragoons in the direction as soon as possible after the arrival of Brevet Captain Taylor.

Some forty persons living at Colville recently petitioned for the presence of troops at that place as they believed their lives and property to be in danger of hostile Indians. I cannot tell at this distance whether they are needlessly alarmed, but shall visit Colville before returning.

Two white men are reported to have been killed recently near the Pelouse river on their way to Colville. An Indian gave me today the names of the Pelouse Indians said to be implicated. I am inclined to think the roomer (*sic*) is correct, but will investigate the matter thoroughly during my trip.

A few nights ago a party of the same tribe made a foray into this village and carried off horses and cattle belonging to various persons, both whites and Indians, and thirteen head of beef cattle, the property of the commissary department. It is my impression that they did not suppose these animals to be in our charge or they would not probably have taken them. However, it is very necessary to check this thieving, or of course worse trouble will grow out of it.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully, your obedient servant,
E. J. Steptoe."

On the basis of what has gone before it would seem that Colonel Steptoe attributed to the Indians a fear or respect of the Army which they most certainly did not possess. But one thing was clear, Steptoe was convinced an expedition was essential; a show of force necessary. On the 2nd of May he again wrote headquarters, saying in part: ". . . It is my intention to leave here some day this week, probably on Thursday, with about 130 dragoons and a detachment of infantry for service with the howitzers, and to move directly where it is understood the hostile party is at present . . ."

On the 6th, Colonel Steptoe left Fort Wallā Walla with Companies C, E and H, of the First Dragoons, twenty-five men of the Ninth Infantry (Company E), dismounted, and two howitzers. He had, in addition to one hundred and fifty-eight effectives, a small party of Nez Percé scouts. Two of the dragoon companies were armed with the forerunner of the carbine, a weapon of slight value called a "muskatoon". In H Company ten of the men had Sharpe's carbines. The colonel

himself carried a .31 calibre cap-and-ball Colt's pistol (serial number 83367).

The armament was motley, not an unusual circumstance on the frontier in 1858, where, only a little earlier, the Spokane Invincibles, a volunteer outfit, had been armed with rifles purchased from Indians for use against the same Indians.

Thus was launched an expedition which was to focus the attention of the nation upon the Northwest as nothing had done before. The same attention would be directed westward nearly a quarter of a century later when a man named Custer also went a-blundering.

One thing remains conspicuous in all that happened later. Colonel Steptoe, sole arbiter, commander of the expedition, seasoned warrior, twice breveted for courage beyond the call of duty in the Mexican War, and an Indian fighter since 1838, took along only forty rounds of ammunition for each man in his command. This would come in for especial attention later, by the Army, by civilians, and by historians.

Subsequently, the Pack Master was to say that, since the expeditions' luggage exceeded the carrying capacity of available pack animals, ammunition was left behind. Lieutenant Colonel Steptoe assumed full responsibility for this.

If Steptoe sanctioned leaving the ammunition behind in the face of what he had already termed "an expedition to the north advisable, if not necessary", what was his reason? There is evidence that Steptoe was not in good health at this time. (He would die in Lynchburg, Virginia in 1865, two days after Abraham Lincoln was assassinated, at the age of 49). Lacking anything more plausible this will be offered: Edward Jenner Steptoe must have had a serious distraction to commit such an error in the face of what he *knew* lay ahead.

Steptoe's command marched for Red Wolf's crossing to investigate a "roomer" that hostiles were there. These, supposedly, were Palouses. Later it was intimated by Father Joset that Steptoe's Nez Percés deliberately took him to the crossing in order to promote a fight between their Palouse enemies and the Army.

More probably, Steptoe's route was chosen because the friendly Nez Percé, Chief Timothy, had a village on the banks of the Snake and a fleet of canoes which Steptoe could employ in crossing his command over the river. Of the crossing, which was effected, Major Trimble wrote: "It was an interesting sight. The Indians seemed perfectly at home in the water. Their dark bodies, glistening like copper, would glide gracefully among the horses. Some of them swam the horses across while others ferried the men and supplies across in canoes."

Just prior to the Army's arrival, however, some hostile Palouses encamped nearby had fled, travelling in a northerly direction. Steptoe's column marched after them *via* Skalassams Creek—later renamed Steptoe Creek. The colonel appeared in no hurry to overtake the Palouses. He marched for eight days, deeper and deeper into hostile country. Except for an occasional abandoned campsite or village he didn't see an Indian, with good reason: the Palouses had gone to the Couer d'Alenes and Spokans seeking allies who would attack the soldiers with them.

On the eighth day, when the column arrived at the banks of the Palouse River, it was met by Indians who told Colonel Steptoe through Nez Percé interpreters that, if the soldiers persisted in their present route and invaded the country of the Spokans, they would be attacked. The march was resumed and on the 15th of May, 1858—a Saturday—a bivouac was made well inside the forbidden country.

There were many Indians around. Some even visited the soldiers. Except for that original warning, there were made no outward indication of hostility. More and more Indians arrived, some afoot, most of them mounted.

On the morning of the 16th, camp was struck and the horses brought in, saddled and mounted. The Nez Percés fanned out, to ride on either side of the soldier-column and ahead of it. Shortly after the march was resumed, several Nez Percés returned to the main column saying they had seen a strong force of Palouse warriors athwart the trail up ahead. Colonel Steptoe ordered the ranks closed up, posted flankers, out-riders, doubled the guard over the packtrain and kept on going.

CHAPTER FIVE

Disaster, Retribution—Fulfilment

FOR several hours Steptoe's column saw nothing more alarming than scattered bands of Indians watching its advance; nothing more menacing than it had been since entering Indian country. Then, an hour or so before noon, the column swung into plain view of a vast force of obviously warlike natives. The Indians sat their horses across the line of march, atop hills on each side of the troops. Some rode around them. All the warriors were well mounted and armed; most of them were decked out in their war trappings. Colonel Steptoe had the column halted and sent out interpreters inviting the Indians to parley.

Several Spokane headmen rode up saying they had been told that Steptoe was in their country for the purpose of annihilating them and that they were, therefore, prepared to resist. Steptoe's answer was that he had not come to fight at all, but was simply passing through on his way to Colville to ascertain the degree of, and reason for, alleged friction between settlers and Indians. The chieftains did not seem convinced. They told the colonel that he could not cross the Spokane River.

Obviously, the Indians were ready to fight. Steptoe closed the parley and informed his officers that he was convinced the Indians would attack. The column was accordingly alerted. Orders were passed to the effect that the soldiers were not to fire the first shot. The column was then put into motion again. The Indians rode closer and kept pace with the command at a distance of about a hundred yards.

Later, when Steptoe bypassed a small canyon which was obviously a trap, the Indians jeered him for his caution. At a

small lake the column halted to rest the horses but the men were not permitted to dismount. Here the Indian leaders rode in for another parley.

The gist of their questioning revolved around Steptoe's two howitzers. Why, they wanted to know, if he was on a peaceable errand, did he bring along artillery? Also, if, as he'd said earlier, he was *en route* to Colville, why had he strayed so far from the direct route? While Steptoe conferred with the Indian leaders their warriors continued to taunt the soldiers by yells and signs. They shouted that, not only would the soldiers be stopped at the Spokane River, their retreat would also be cut off because the hostiles would go back to Timothy's camp and destroy the canoes.

The parley and jeering continued until sundown. Then the Indians said, since this was Sunday, they would not break the Sabbath by fighting, but on the morrow they would destroy the soldiers. Throughout all this the troopers sat their saddles forbidden to reply, and, only at sundown, when the Indians withdrew, were they allowed to dismount and prepare their nightly bivouac.

A strong sentry detail was posted, horses were kept close and the men slept fitfully, fully armed and clothed. There was no doubt that the hostiles would attack on the 17th. Some thought they might come in the night.

Colonel Steptoe held an officers' conference during which it was proposed that the command withdraw since there was no doubt but that a fierce engagement would follow its further attempts to reach Colville. Also, what the Indians had said about destroying the canoes back at the Snake left little room for doubt that the hostiles had planned their strategy expertly. To cap it, Steptoe's force was no match for the multitude of warriors estimated to be a thousand strong, with forty rounds per man.

A Nez Percé scout was sent back to Walla Walla to explain the peril Steptoe's column faced and apprise the Army there of the colonel's decision to retreat. A request was also made for additional Regulars to meet the column at the Snake. Small hope was then expressed that the messenger would get through,

it being the concensus of opinion among officers that the column was completely surrounded.

The morning of the 17th arrived, clear as a bell. The column mounted and was led back in a straight line over its previous route and, almost immediately, Indians began to converge upon its rear which was protected by Lieutenant Gaston's Company E of the Dragoons.

A strange figure then pushed his way through the Indian lines urging a jaded horse toward the soldiers. It was Father Joset of the Couer d'Alene Mission, the most respected white man in the hostiles' country. He was received by Colonel Steptoe while the command continued its retreat. Father Joset told Steptoe he was certain an attack upon the column was imminent. Steptoe concurred in this. Father Joset then asked the colonel if Steptoe had been told by the Indians that he was supplying them with arms and ammunition to use against the Army. Colonel Steptoe said he had been told something like that. Father Joset, tall, lean, big-nosed, regretted the rumour, assured Steptoe there was nothing to it and in a final effort to avert hostilities asked the colonel to meet once more with the Indians. Steptoe told the priest his horses were too badly excited by the yelling and cavorting of the tribesmen for him to stop. Father Joset then proposed that the column keep on marching and a parley be held *en route*. To this the colonel agreed and Father Joset hurried back to seek out the Indian leaders. He found Chief Vincent and returned with him. The chieftain was informed by Steptoe that the troops were withdrawing because their presence was offensive to the Indians, which was at least partly true.

As the three men rode along, a Nez Percé scout rode up in a highly agitated state, swore at Chief Vincent and asked him why his people didn't fire if they wanted to fight. Before Vincent replied, or either Colonel Steptoe or Father Joset could intervene, the scout struck Chief Vincent across the face and shoulders with his quirt, almost unseating the headman.

Colonel Steptoe interceded, sent the Nez Percé away and apologised to Chief Vincent. Beyond the marching column,

however, the hostiles had seen Vincent whipped. In their already excited condition they began to scream and howl in fierce protest. Vincent's uncle then dashed up and shouted for Vincent to come away; the Palouses were going to open fire. Vincent quirted his horse away from the column and followed his uncle beyond rifle range of the soldiers.

The first Indian fire was directed against Gaston's Dragoons at the rear of the column. The range was too great so that no casualties resulted. Orders were passed that the troopers were not to answer this fire. Emboldened, the Indians swept closer and stepped up their attack until the gunfire was uninterrupted. Still no soldiers were injured.

Step toe's hope, that a battle might be averted, collapsed. Lieutenant Gaston's horse was shot from under him. In the same fusilade the lieutenant was struck in the hand. Warriors came closer, shot from under their horse's necks and pressed the fight. For two miles that was the way it went for Step toe's retreat. What precipitated the final clash was the changing terrain. Both sides were aware of the strategic value of hills along the route as the running battle swirled into broken country. Indians would try to beat soldiers to eminences overlooking the column's route whilst soldiers would contest them. One particularly advantageous hill was seen by Colonel Step toe to be of especial value; accordingly he sent Lieutenant Gregg to occupy it, thus bringing on the final struggle.

The Indians and Gregg's dragoons had a regular race for the hill. The soldiers got there first. The warriors then stormed up another hill nearby. Gregg charged them and drove them away.

Colonel Step toe's race for the Snake was checked. What most field commanders in the Northwest sought to avoid, by engaging in running fights, was no longer possible. The column was surrounded, rendered static, under the most determined attack by a force of Indians which outnumbered it seven to one.

Just forward of Gaston's company, the pack animals were in a frenzy from the deafening screams and gunfire of the hostiles. Lieutenant Gaston had broken every attempt by the Indians to breach the column *via* the rear. In consort with Captain

Taylor he kept the hostiles away by short charges. Fighting desperately, both Taylor and Gaston were detained down on the plain when Colonel Steptoe and Captain Winder, with the howitzers, raced for Gregg's hilltop.

As soon as the attackers saw that Gaston and Taylor were separated from the rest of the column, they redoubled their efforts to annihilate them. What they had not been able to do Steptoe's flight to the hilltop had done; split the command. A horde of warriors swung in front of the embattled troopers effectually cutting them off from the hilltop. Lieutenant Gaston and Captain Taylor saw their peril as soon as the Indians in front of them began to accumulate. Gaston reformed his men in the face of a flanking fire, preparatory to charging the Indians in front, in what would have been a desperate bid to reach the ridge and the balance of the command.

Meanwhile, from his eminence, Lieutenant Gregg saw what was in prospect for Gaston and Taylor. He immediately got a segment of the command under way to attack the Indians in front of Gaston. Gregg's timing was perfect. When he saw that Gaston's re-forming was complete, he led the charge down off the hill, aiming at the rear of the warriors who were facing Gaston. The Indians, instead of cutting Gaston and Taylor off, having them between two forces of their own, found that Gregg behind them, and Gaston in front, had reversed the manoeuvre so that they were caught in a pincer themselves. They broke and fled, leaving many dead, including Chief Victor of the Couer d'Alencs. The Indians to the rearward, however, attacked with extreme vigour and the soldiers were forced back toward the hill. When they achieved the eminence, the Steptoe command was once more united.

Southward of the besieged was the Tohottonimme water-course. Very shortly after the command was united upon the hill, Colonel Steptoe decided to make for the water. The Indians by then were exhibiting a perfect frenzy. Their losses at the hands of Gregg, Gaston, and Taylor, plus their disappointment when the rearguard escaped them, inspired them to their greatest efforts. Additional hostiles were pouring out

of the hills and those upon the outlying eminences were smoke-signalling for still other late-arriving allies to hasten up.

The condition within Steptoe's battle-circle was dire. The horses were unmanageable. Many had been killed, some wounded and the rest were panicky with excitement. This necessitated detailing men to prevent the animals from running away, from trampling prone riflemen. In turn this also cut down the effectives available to face the enemy.

Colonel Steptoe aligned his command with Gaston's and Taylor's companies at their old rear guard position. A warning was then issued to the men against wasting ammunition—which was rapidly diminishing—and, shortly before noon, the column started to descend from Gregg's hill. The hostiles, watching Steptoe's preparations to move out, and anticipated his course. They threw themselves upon the command, rolled in, fired and raced away only to return and repeat the manoeuvre time and time again. The rear ranks were able to empty quite a number of Indian saddles by resorting to those successful little charges, short and vicious. E Company was compelled to make one of these charges against pressing hostiles and, in the course of the bitter in-fighting, Lieutenant Gaston was killed. His company fell back and broke when the Indians charged. Only the timely arrival of Gregg's force saved the column from being breached. During this *melée* the pack animals broke loose. Colonel Steptoe had the howitzers fired, effectively smashing the hostiles' concerted attack upon the column's rear.

The troops had been fighting for something like half an hour and hadn't covered quite a half a mile. They could see the watercourse which was their objective. The Indians with equal stubbornness—and far greater numbers—were just as determined the column should not reach the creek. Captain Taylor was shot off his horse. The triumphant Indians raised the yell and tried mightily to claim his body. Taylor's Regulars placed themselves around the captain and, when the warriors swarmed up, fought them with fists, clubbed muskets, pistols and sabres until they were routed. Captain Taylor was saved to die later.

Colonel Steptoe saw the impracticability of continuing toward the Tohottonimme and altered his course to reach a knoll nearby from which he expected to make his final stand. As soon as the thirst-tortured soldiers got to the top of this hill, their enemies affected a strong surround. Steptoe had the remaining horses put in the centre of the circle, ordered the men to conceal themselves in the tall grass, and had the wounded placed in the most secluded spot available. He was then ready for his last-ditch fight, which everyone seemed to believe would be there on the hilltop.

Surgeon Randolph worked on Captain Taylor but the wound was hopeless. The bullet had pierced Taylor's throat and, with each breath, gouts of blood pumped out. He had scarcely been laid upon the ground when he died. There were also other wounded, most of whom remained in the line.

Now the Indians dismounted, and began slipping through the tall grass and brush. Some camouflaged their head-pieces with switches of grass and leaves. Others belly-crawled up the hill without firing until very close. With the exception of those involved in stalking the defensive circle, virtually every Indian was screaming. They all appeared confident; indeed, had every reason to be confident.

Several times, when it transpired that stalking wasn't likely to affect much, all-out frontal charges were hurled against the hill. These were, no doubt, at least in part inspired by the fact that the soldiers were not firing as often as they had in the earlier phases of the battle. This was misinterpreted to mean that the ranks had been decimated. Actually, orders had been given that ammunition was to be conserved at all costs. What broke the mass charges was the howitzers.

By early evening the soldiers were in a bad way, not only from wounds and exhaustion but also from thirst. They were therefore relieved when the Indians could be heard calling to one another to withdraw. Nez Percés on the hill said a cessation of hostilities was being ordered by chieftains because of nightfall.

During the night of the 17th, Colonel Steptoe and his men

sat in ghostly darkness. Moans from the wounded were as audible as the chanting and wailing of the enemy. On the off chance that the hostiles might forego their superstitious reluctance to fight at night, several probing sorties were made. No Indians were found near the hilltop. An inspection of men and means was then held and a stunning discovery was made. The command had exactly three bullets left per man!

Obviously Steptoe's force could not repel the first attack the Indians would launch at dawn on the 18th. Lieutenant Gregg and Captain Winder discussed this between them and finally went to the colonel who told them there was, in his opinion, only one thing left to do—die fighting. Steptoe's conclusions were, first, that there wasn't help any closer than the Snake River, if indeed there was any help there. Secondly, there was the matter of the wounded. To abandon them was out of the question. Flight, with its attendant discomfort, would not only be impeded by them, it would also very likely result in many additional deaths. Thirdly, the burden of the howitzers would slow them considerably. Lastly, Colonel Steptoe doubted if they could get past the hostiles undetected.

Winder and Gregg returned to their posts. Gregg clung to his belief that flight, if it only succeeded in saving a small percentage of the command, was preferable to awaiting certain doom. He induced Captain Winder to go with him to see the colonel once more. Steptoe capitulated after a second, lengthy discussion and authorised Lieutenant Gregg to arouse and prepare the men.

As the night deepened, Indian howls and wails lessened; their fires were seen to be burning low. Gregg had the survivors alerted and sent out scouts to see if Indian sentinels lay south of their position. When assured they did not, he then had graves dug for the slain, horses being led back and forth over them to obliterate traces of burial. An identical procedure was followed in regard to the howitzers.

Of the many wounded, a fighting Frenchman, Private Victor DeMoy, and gallant Sergeant Will Williams, were thought the

least likely to survive. In all, the wounded numbered fifteen. The worst of them were tied to their saddles. Such means as were available were then employed to disguise the lighter coloured horses and Lieutenant Gregg established a line of march. All metal accoutrements which couldn't be discarded were muffled by being covered with cloth. Because so many saddle animals had been killed, the remaining pack animals were pressed into service. Beasts not taken were left picketed on the knoll to lend an impression that the Army was still there.

Before midnight, Colonel Steptoe led out. Gregg was searching for outlying sentries—some of whom he found asleep in the grass—when the first units decamped in complete silence and darkness. Surgeon Randolph came across Gregg, inquired what he was waiting for and told him Steptoe had already gone. Gregg then finished rounding up sentries—mostly Nez Percés—and led the last of the command down off the hill.

The retreat was a ghostly affair. Men riding gaunt horses in total silence through the watch-hours of the night. Private DeMoy couldn't stand it. At his urgent request he was left beside the trail clutching his three remaining bullets. He was never seen again. Later, Sergeant Williams, riding with a splintered hip, couldn't restrain himself; he, also, was left. Years afterwards the Couer d'Alenes said that in the pursuit which followed, their warriors found Williams who asked them to shoot him, but that instead they turned him over to an old squaw who stayed with Williams until he expired. Colonel Steptoe believed both DeMoy and Williams died shortly after being abandoned and said so in subsequent reports of the retreat. •

By dawn of the 18th, the survivors had reached the Palouse River. After crossing a brief halt was ordered. Saddles were tightened, arms checked and numbers counted. Someone said they had seen Indians far to the rear and Lieutenant Gregg immediately ordered out a skirmish line. Nez Percé scouts were sent to surrounding hilltops but they saw no Indians and so reported.

The command continued on its way and, shortly before noon, arrived upon the banks of the Snake where a long rest was made. Across the way, in the vicinity of Chief Timothy's camp, there weren't many Indians. What few there were seemed agitated by the appearance of Steptoe's scarecrows. Because they were thoroughly used up, exhausted—and because the Nez Percé scouts said they were not being pursued—crossing the river was delayed until the 19th.

Chief Timothy sent some of his men up the backtrail to warn Steptoe in the event that hostiles should come up. He also had women make poultices for the wounded. At daybreak of the 19th, Timothy had breakfast prepared for the soldiers, after which he supervised their crossing of the river. Before all the men were across, Captain F. T. Dent (Ulysses S. Grant's brother-in-law), clattered up with reinforcements from Fort Walla Walla. Steptoe's Nez Percé messenger had passed through and carried the plea for aid the full breadth of hostile country.

Dent brought with him provisions for the survivors and grain for their horses. The combined commands struck out from Chief Timothy's camp, travelling slowly in order to suit the needs of the wounded. They were unmolested until the evening of the 20th, when the Nez Percé scouts sighted a powerful, fast-moving party of horsemen. These were identified as Indians. Colonel Steptoe immediately ordered the column into a defensive position. This caused the approaching Indians to stop some way off, to break out a huge American flag, and continue toward the soldiers more slowly. They proved to be Nez Percés under their renowned war-leader, Lawyer, who had heard of Steptoe's defeat. They had hastened up to join the battle and, arriving too late, had followed after the soldiers.

Ignoring the condition of the wounded, Lawyer urged Steptoe to return with him and between them they would teach the federated hostiles a lesson. Steptoe demurred and the Nez Percés rode on up the river by themselves while Steptoe pushed on for Walla Walla, where he arrived on the 22nd of May, 1858.

Steptoe's defeat had many names: Battle of Rosalia, Battle

of Tohottonimme, Steptoe Disaster, *et cetera*. It also had varied repercussions, not the least of which was the censuring by Washington of an officer who, knowing he was going up against hostiles, had taken along only forty rounds of ammunition per man.

Whatever conflicting viewpoints proved, whatever the costs and tragedies (Captain Taylor's wife and two children watching the men march into Fort Walla Walla), the results were swift and positive. General Clarke, Territorial legislatures, the Army in the field, settlers and volunteer companies, all knew that such a smashing victory over American armed might would arouse instant, widespread celebrations in hostile camps and villages. It could be prevented from causing the worst blood-letting to-date only by fast, decisive action. Such a triumph would solidify Indians, bind their confederation and induce doubters to join up.

While the stunning news of his defeat was being digested, Colonel Steptoe wrote his personal report of the action:

"Fort Walla Walla, May 23, 1858.

Major: On the 2nd instant I informed you of my intention to move northward with a part of my command. Accordingly, on the 6th I left here with C, E, and H, First Dragoons, and E, Ninth Infantry; in all five company officers and one hundred and fifty-two enlisted men. Hearing that the hostile Pelouses were near Al-on-on-we, in the Nez Perces' land, I moved to that point, and was ferried across the Snake River by Timothy, a Nez Perces chief. The enemy fled toward the north and I followed leisurely on the road to Colville. On Sunday morning, the 16th, when near the To-hoto-nim-me in the Spokans country, we found ourselves suddenly in the presence of ten or twelve hundred Indians of various tribes—Spokans, Pelouses, Couer d'Alenes, Yakimas, and some others—all armed, painted and defiant. I moved slowly on until just about to enter a ravine that wound along the bases of several hills, which were all crowned by excited savages. Perceiving that it was their purpose to attack us in this dangerous place, I turned aside and encamped, the whole wild, frenzied mass moving parallel to us, and by yells, taunts, and menaces, apparently trying to drive us to some initiatory act of violence. Toward night a number of chiefs rode up to talk to me, and inquired what were our motives to this intrusion upon them. I answered that we were

passing on to Colville, and had no hostile intentions towards the Spokans, who had always been our friends, nor toward any other tribes who were friendly; that my chief aim in coming so far was to see the Indians and white people at Colville, and, by friendly discussion with both, endeavor to strengthen their good feelings for each other. They expressed themselves satisfied but would not consent to let me have canoes to cross the Spokane River. I concluded for this reason, to retrace my steps at once, and the next morning turned back towards this post. We had not marched three miles when the Indians who had gathered on the hills adjoining the line of march, began an attack upon the rear guard, and immediately the fight became general. We labored under the great disadvantage of having to defend the packtrain while in motion and in rolling country peculiarly favorable to the Indian mode of warfare. We had only a small quantity of ammunition, but, in their excitement, the soldiers could not be restrained from firing it in the wildest manner. They did, however, under the leading of their respective commanders, sustain well the reputation of the army for some hours, charging the enemy repeatedly with gallantry and success. The difficult and dangerous duty of flanking the column was assigned to Brevet Captain Taylor and Lieutenant Gaston, to both of whom it proved fatal. The latter fell about twelve o'clock and the enemy soon after charging formally upon his company, it fell back in confusion and could not be rallied. About a half hour after this Captain Taylor was brought in mortally wounded, upon which I immediately took possession of a convenient height and halted. The fight continued here with unabated activity, the Indians occupying neighboring heights and working themselves along to pick off our men. The wounded increased in number continually. Twice the enemy gave unmistakable evidence of a design to carry our position by assault, and their number and desperate courage caused me to fear the most serious consequences to us from such an attempt on their part. It was manifest that the loss of their officers and comrades began to tell upon the spirit of the soldiers, that they were becoming discouraged, and not to be relied upon with confidence. Some of them were but recruits but recently joined; two of the companies had muskets, which were utterly worthless in our present condition; and, what was most alarming, only two or three rounds of ammunition remained to some of the men, and but few to any of them. It was plain the enemy would give the troops no rest during the night, and they would be still further disqualified for stout resistance on the morrow, while the numbers of enemies would certainly be increased. I determined for these reasons, to make a forced march to

the Snake River, about eighty-five miles distant, and secure the canoes in advance of the Indians, who had already threatened to do the same by us. After consulting with the officers, all of whom urged me to the step as the only means in their opinion of securing the safety of the command, I concluded to abandon everything that might impede our march. Accordingly we set out about ten o'clock in perfectly good order, leaving the disabled animals and such as were not in condition to travel so far and so fast, and, with deep pain I have to add, the two howitzers. The necessity for this last measure will give you, as well as many words, a conception of the strait to which we all believed ourselves reduced. Not an officer of the command doubted that we would be overwhelmed with the first rush of the enemy upon our position in the morning; to retreat further by day, with our wounded men and property, was out of the question; to retreat slowly by night equally so; it was therefore necessary to relieve ourselves of all encumbrances and fly. We had no horses able to carry the guns over 80 miles without resting, and if the enemy should attack us *en route*, as, from their ferocity we certainly expected that they would do, not a soldier would be spared for any other duty than skirmishing. For these reasons, which I own candidly seemed to me more cogent at the time than they do now, I resolved to bury the howitzers. What distresses me is that no attempt was made to bring them off; and all I can add is that if this was an error of judgement it was committed after the calmest discussion of the matter, in which, I believe, every officer agreed with me.

Enclosed is a list of the killed and wounded. The enemy acknowledges a loss of 9 killed and 40 or 50 wounded, many of them mortally. It is known to us that this is an underestimate, for one of the officers informs me that on a single spot where Lieutenants Gregg and Gaston met in a join charge twelve dead Indians were counted. Many others were seen to fall.

I cannot do justice, in this communication, to the conduct of the officers throughout this affair. The gallant bearing of each and all was accompanied by an admirable coolness and sound judgement. To the skill and promptness of Assistant Surgeon Randolph the wounded are deeply indebted.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

E. J. STEPTOE,

Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel, United States Army.

Step toe's report was forwarded through Army channels to the office of the Lieutenant General, Armies of the United States.

From there it went directly to the Secretary of War with the following endorsement:

(To:)

Major W. A. Mackall,

Assistant Adjutant General U.S.A. San Francisco."

"This is a candid report of a disastrous affair. The small amount of ammunition is surprising and unaccounted for. It seems that Brevet Brigadier General Clarke has ordered up all the disposable troops in California, and probably will further reinforce Steptoe's district with detachments of the Fourth and Ninth infantry; and, on the 29th *ultimo*, I gave instructions for sending the Sixth or Seventh regiment of infantry from Salt Lake valley across the Pacific and via Walla Walla, if practicable, in preference to any route south of that.

Respectfully submitted to the Secretary of War.

WINFIELD SCOTT.

July 15, 1858."

There can be no doubt that Steptoe's defeat occasioned a re-evaluation of the government's policies in the Northwest, as well as making glaringly plain an immediate need to pour troops into the country in order to head off the triumphant Indian confederacy before its scattered armies could be brought together against some vital point like Portland, Vancouver, or one of the many forts now dotting the territories.

Indians who had remained upon reservations now left by the hundreds to join the holy war. The first phase in the campaign to expel the whites was over, a total Indian victory.

The Conquest had dragged on for years. First, it was limited by the number of Americans. Next, the Mexican War kept it from being prosecuted vigorously by the whites. Then the so-called Mormon War did likewise. But all that time white supremacy was being formed by a nucleus of persistent settlers. Then the Gold Rush precipitated a stampede westward second to none in the history of free peoples. But offsetting this were Indian troubles all over the frontier. These necessitated the deployment of professional fighters so that at no time were very many assembled at any given point. No sooner were soldiers

sent to one theatre of operations from another, than the plains and mountains behind them burst afire again. •

The nation would not tolerate the expense of an army the size it should have had in those years. Thus, volunteer units sprang up, but these were largely seasonal, adventuring expeditions subject to every whim and every vagary of undisciplined mobs. They fought like tigers in defence of their own but rarely proved effective far from home. Yet disasters like the Steptoe affair—and much later the Custer affair—made American taxpayers furious.

Conversely, when a country like the far Northwest broke into the spotlight, the Army scurried to make up for past deficiencies which were not, necessarily, exclusively the Army's fault. But it was convenient, customary, to blame the Army for failures. In the case of the Battle of Tohottonimmc, this was done full measure.

This wasn't, of course, the Northwest of twenty years earlier. There were dozens of growing cities, hundreds of settlements, men who had come to manhood hating and fearing Indians, men who were eager to fight a decisive battle, once and for all ending the reign of terror which had been part of the warp of their childhood. They were not soldiers—didn't, in fact, think much of professional soldiers—they were settlers, miners, lumbermen, cattlemen; men who lived by their hands, were very gifted with firearms and inured from youth to hardship. They demanded action!

General Clarke acted under the impelling insistence of that great groundswell of public—and military—opinion. He had a powerful striking force, under Colonel Wright, organized at Walla Walla. Nez Percés were enlisted by the hundreds, volunteer companies were mustered and brigades of soldiers made rendezvous at Walla Walla. In a sentence: the nation, the settlers and the army, had had enough. There had never been a war of extermination despite all the talk; now there would be.

Orders, directives, letters and official communications, went to the Army headquarters at San Francisco; to Washington,

D.C.; to Catholic missions and the legislatures; were exchanged between civilians and officers in all branches of the service. In essence they were all the same: since an urgent need for retaliatory action existed, let it be prosecuted implacably, until resistance to American domination of the Northwest was crushed once and for all!

In order to be closer, General Clarke went to Vancouver, in Washington Territory. His first action was not against the Indians, however, but against the Hudson's Bay Company, which had imported some two thousand pounds of powder and shot for trade purposes. Obviously, when traded to Indians, the majority of this would be used against soldiers and settlers. While waiting to hear from Company officials, Clarke learnt that Indians had appeared at a Company post desirous of trading off Army horses and mules. One of the warriors was flourishing Lieutenant Gaston's sword and another riding Taylor's blood-stained saddle.

When the Hudson's Bay Company spokesman arrived, Clarke pointed out that furnishing Indians with ammunition under existing conditions constituted a breach of international deportment. Also, that the Company, an English concern, was operating within American territory and as such, was considered a guest, not a participant in internal affairs. Chief Trader Graham immediately ordered that all U.S. animals purchased from Indians be turned over to the Americans and the sale of ammunition be halted.

Meanwhile, Father Joset worked feverishly, unstintingly, to stop what was snowballing. He understood Indians; he also knew the temper of the whites. He insisted peace be made between the races. Toward this end, alone and unarmed, he rode from Indian village to encampment seeking to avert cataclysm. His courage was rewarded with disillusionment, as is shown in extracts from letters written to General Clarke by hostile leaders.

Saulotkin, who had led warriors against Steptoe, said: "The practice of the Indians is different from what you might think; when they want to make peace, when they want to cease

hostilities, they bury the dead and talk and live on good terms. They don't speak of more blood. I speak sincerely: I, Saulotkin, (say), let us finish this war. . . ."

Garry Spokan wrote: "I am at a loss what to think of it, for you say, you white people, that this is my country; you Americans and English, claim the land . . . You make a useless war with Indians . . . Now I hear that somebody—you, perhaps, General Clarke, want to make peace. I would be very glad no enmity should be left. I, Indian, am unacquainted with your ways, as you are with mine. When we meet, you Americans, you are ignorant of the uses of the Indians. When you meet me, we talk friendly; we shake hands. Two years after you met me, you American, I heard words from white people, when I concluded you wanted to kill me for my land. . . . Every year I hear it. . . . I am very sorry that war has begun. Like the fire in a dry prairie, it will spread all over this country, until now so peaceful. . . ."

Melkapsi, with less complaint and more forthrightness, said: "I feel unwilling to give you up my three brothers, for I think we fought, I won't begin to make peace. . . . You killed three of my relations; it weighs heavy on my heart. . . . Though you think I am poor I do not think so. If you want to make peace, peace must be made with all the Indians of the country. It is not for your goods' sake that I came to hostilities. As long as I live I don't want you to take possession of my country. . . ."

Indians, not without cause, distrusted anyone with a white skin, and, they had a splendid victory to nourish their warlikeness. Father Joset was pleading to the treetops; crying out in the night.

Colonel Wright, brisk and energetic—at last with a free hand—inaugurated a drill system at Walla Walla. Daily rifle practice became mandatory. Toughening-up marches were held. Artillery practice went on day after day until the hills and plains rang with the thunder of guns. During all this, reinforcements were arriving. Of course, Indians who visited Walla Walla carried tidings of the Army's preparations to their dissident friends and relations. This aroused a bristling attitude in

Indiandom, about which the Nez Percés warned Colonel Wright.

Finally, on the 3rd of August, 1858, Wright was ready to march. Orders were issued to acquaint the command with its order of departure. On the 7th Captain Keys left Walla Walla with a company of dragoons, six companies of artillery, two twelve pounders, and orders to blaze the way. He took along about thirty thousand rations.

On the Tucannon, Captain Key's pioneers under Lieutenants Kip and Morgan were ahead of the main column brushing out a path. Some Indians appeared, talked with the white soldiers for awhile, then walked away, whirled and fired. The shots were returned. Then a larger party of warriors came up but, when fired upon with determination, they scattered. The road-building progressed so that, by early afternoon, the balance of the command was enabled to bivouac on the Snake River without being detained by underbrush.

About nine o'clock that night, an Indian shouted something from the river's far bank. Captain Keys and another officer, with a Nez Percés interpreter, went to the riverbank and inquired what the Indian wanted. The warrior swore at the Nez Percé, a companion with him fired at the shadows where the officers stood. Immediately four nearby enlisted men returned the fire but it was too dark to see if a kill had been scored. Beyond this incident and the capture of several spies, Captain Keys had no serious trouble. He was subsequently detailed to build a blockhouse at the ford.

Colonel Wright imparted his plan of campaign—if he had such—to no one. He pushed steadily into the hostiles' country seeking a fight. It was generally felt that the hostiles were up ahead somewhere, mustering for a last-ditch fight. It was also thought that the force they would eventually array against Wright's command would be approximately the same size as that force which had defeated Lieutenant Colonel Steptoe.

On the 30th of August, a sweltering, humid day, two enlisted men died from eating poisonous tubers. Some Indians appeared for the first time since Keys' meeting with them. Wright was

then about thirty miles north and west of the Steptoe battle-field. At about five o'clock, Indians rode close enough to engage in a musket duel with Wright's pickets. The colonel sent out a mounted detachment and the natives fled.

The following morning, Indians were seen on either side of the column. They were obviously waiting for Wright's command to get into a similar position to Steptoe's. Wright ignored the savages and forged ahead. Several miles from the early-evening bivouac, warriors rolled in to strike at flankers and the supply wagons. They were repulsed.

The following morning, the 1st of September, 1858, Wright saw a considerable gathering of hostiles atop a strategic hill several miles away. Because this hill obviously offered a commanding view of the entire countryside for miles about, Wright ordered a strong force to dislodge the Indians there. Unlike many Indian fighters, Colonel Wright was not content to scatter the foe. He accordingly sent a second contingent from his force around behind the hill to intercept the Indians when they were driven off the eminence.

According to plan the Indians were chased off the hilltop. Fleeing down the back slope they ran head-on into a volley from the soldiers below. They lost several dead and were greatly demoralized.

The soldiers atop the captured hill were awed by what was visible inland; hundreds upon hundreds of warriors daubed and feathered for war, were loping their horses up and down to limber them up for action. There were Indians as far as the soldiers could see. The alarm was sent to Colonel Wright. He did not stop to align his command but pushed steadily ahead.

When within view of the great Indian army, Wright had his line formed like a huge crescent. The farther tips cut the hostiles off from the forest, so far as it was possible to do so. The artillery was placed in fixed positions upon slightly higher ground and the advance was ordered.

Wright's planning back at Walla Walla had included something with which the Indians were not familiar. Now they learnt of it. As soon as the troops were close enough they

opened fire. This was returned briskly by the natives but they had enough saddles emptied to seek the shelter of the woods farther back. For the first time in Northwestern Indian wars the recently-imported, long-barrelled rifle was used against Indians. Its range was vastly superior to that of the carbines and trade-guns carried by Indians. Where warriors were armed only with lance, bow or war-club, they were woefully at the mercy of the soldiers.

A few strong-hearts kept the field, raising the yell and defying the advancing column. Major Greier ordered his dragoons—among whom were Taylor's and Gaston's units—to charge the strong-hearts. The Indians were overtaken and troopers rode in among them. A lieutenant split a warrior from crown to shoulder-blade with his sabre. This happened to be an Indian of some renown. With his killing the others turned to flee—too late. With soldiers in among them the Indians endeavoured to fight and flee at the same time. Long sabres were swinging. . . .

The most amazing thing about this fight—which later was called the Battle of Four Lakes—was that not a single soldier was killed or wounded in spite of the thousands of rounds shot at them.

Wright bivouacked near the battlefield after the Indians had withdrawn. He rested both men and horses for three days, then, on the 4th, he broke camp and marched deeper into Indian country. Hostiles were seen but rarely got within rifle range. They contented themselves with shouting insults and threats; they did not offer to fight.

Colonel Wright wanted to fight Indians. So did his men. They forced a fight on the 5th which has since been called the "Battle of Spokane Plains." In this action the column was opposed by Palouses, Pend Orielles, Spokans, Couer d'Alenes, and other tribesmen. In bringing on the fight, Colonel Wright matched aggressiveness with aggressiveness. The Indians sought to intercept the column upon the plains, to prevent it from reaching some scrubby pine trees which constituted the sole available protection. The opposing armies marched head-on toward one another and, when Wright halted to reinforce his

wagontrain and close up his ranks, the Indians also halted—to fire the grass, dead and dry at this time of the year, in the face of the Army's advance toward the covering trees.

When both lines were once more under way, Wright sent out skirmishers while the Indians detached mounted units to harass the flank and sides of Wright's column. Firing began, swelled and continued steady until the soldiers broke through the smoke and got in among the trees. Then the howitzers were fired and the hostiles withdrew temporarily, re-grouped and flanked the soldiers who then turned and fought a rear-guard action with considerable vigour, making repeated sweeps until the Indians were forced out into the open. Colonel Wright then ordered the march resumed and for seven hectic hours—and fourteen miles—the running fight was continued.

When the soldiers reached the Spokane River, the hostiles withdrew and again, to everyone's amazement, not a single casualty was reported. Of this Wright wrote: "A kind of Providence again protected us, although at many times the balls flew thick and fast through our ranks. . . ." One man was eventually found who had been slightly wounded.

Old Kamiakin was nearly laid low during this battle when a howitzer shell sheered a large limb off a tree under which he and his staff were standing. The limb struck Kamiakin on the head and very nearly broke his skull.

The Indians were not nearly as fortunate as the soldiers. They lost, along with three of their foremost chieftains, a considerable number of warriors. When they withdrew, parties were sent back along the way seeking and carrying off wounded and dead; the exact number was unknown but later it was said to have been definitely in excess of sixty killed outright.

Colonel Wright ordered camp erected beside the river. The weather turned unbearably humid. Dust arose from the ground with the slightest encouragement. The horses were listless and the men languid. All day, the 6th of September, Indians scouted the command but made no offer to resume hostilities.

On the 7th, Garry Spokan in company with several other hostiles came as far as the far bank of the river and said they

wanted to parley.⁴ The Nez Percés took this information to Colonel Wright who was in the act of ordering the camp struck. He told the Nez Percés to say that if the hostiles went upriver and met him at a ford he would talk to them. Arriving at the designated spot, Wright had camp set up, let the hostiles cool their heels until he was ready, then signalled for them to come over.

Garry said he had never encouraged fighting against the whites; that firebrands in his tribe had over-ruled him and he hadn't been able to restrain them. Wright told him to go back across the river and say to the hostiles: "I have met you in two bloody battles; you have been badly whipped; you have lost several chiefs and many warriors killed or wounded. I have not lost a man or an animal. . . . I did not come into this country to ask you to make peace; I came here to fight. Now, when you are tired of war, you ask for peace; I will tell you what you must do: You must come to me with your arms, with your women and children, and everything you have, and lay them at my feet; you must put your trust in me and my mercy. If you do this, I shall then dictate the terms upon which I will grant you peace. If you do not do this, war will be made on you this year and the next, until your nation shall be exterminated!"

Garry Spokane went back across the river. Later, another hostile, Chief Polotkin, with nine strapping warriors, came into camp for a parley. Wright knew them all, not only as participants in the Steptoe disaster, but as part of the hostiles he had fought at Four Lakes and Spokane Plains. He ordered them to be seated, had soldiers relieve them of their arms and placed them under guard. Other hostiles desirous of parleying—or spying—were told to stay away from the bivouac unless they were all of them ready to capitulate unconditionally.

When no more came in, Wright moved his command out once more. On the 8th, they saw a spiralling dustcloud. The colonel ordered a reconnaissance to be made. The dustcloud turned out to be Indians driving their livestock out of the Army's path. Pursuit was immediately despatched. Lieutenant Mullan with the Nez Percés was most successful in this,

being afoot, for the country was almost impassable for mounted men.

When Lieutenant Mullan's side expedition was concluded with the capture of a considerable herd of enemy animals—eight or nine hundred horses alone—the colonel held a court-martial for one of Polotkin's warriors. Evidence was weighed and shortly before sundown the warrior was hung to a nearby tree.

The camp then retired.

On the 9th, the marching column found and burnt several Indian villages. In one they found the gun-carriage from one of Steptoe's howitzers. Also, in these villages, were great stores of food. This being September, the destruction of the provisions was a major blow to the hostiles.

A Couer d'Alene came into camp with a message from Father Joset. The Indians were demoralized and begging him to intercede; they wanted peace. Colonel Wright sent the Couer d'Alene back with the same message he had given Garry Spokan: unconditional surrender, or else. To prove he meant exactly that—but privately because he found his captured animals too unruly and wild to bother with—Colonel Wright had the horses killed.

It required two days to accomplish the slaughter of so many horses. When leading the horses out and shooting them individually proved far too slow, companies of riflemen were mustered. They fired in volleys into the massed animals until the last one was killed.

The closer Wright got to Father Joset's mission, where a great majority of the Indians, now thoroughly frightened, sought protection, the lower went their spirits. When he finally arrived and went into camp, Indian terror was so great they were afraid to surrender.

Through the intercession of Father Joset, a few of the more hardy hostiles were induced to meet the colonel. When it was discovered that Colonel Wright did not hang every Indian he caught, a few more spokesmen ventured in, bringing with them everything they thought might appease this terrible soldier-

officer. Mules, horses, guns, parts of uniforms, anything that had once been connected with the Army or with settlers, was offered as proof of Indian good faith.

Kamiakin, the rabble-rouser Wright wanted most, had faded deeper into the forests, and the Yakimas and Spokans remained in hiding. They were partly defiant, partly demoralized and fearful after the disintegration of the hostile armies; knowing themselves high on the wanted list, they would not join with the majority of Indians in seeking peace. Of them, Colonel Wright wrote headquarters: ". . . It is doubtful whether they will voluntarily come in. If they do not, I shall pursue them as soon as I can settle with the Couer d'Alenes."

Punishment was severe. Wright wrote very truthfully: "For the last eighty miles our route had been marked by slaughter and devastation: 900 horses and a large number of cattle have been killed or appropriated to our own use; many horses, with large quantities of wheat and oats, also many caches of vegetables, kamas, and dried berries, have been destroyed. A blow has been struck which they will never forget."

On the 17th, Wright summoned the Couer d'Alenes to a council and demanded the instantaneous surrender of the men who spearheaded the attack upon Steptoe's column, the prompt surrender of all property in their possession previously belonging to whites, and their immediate and unqualified agreement to allow white people to travel "at all times" through their country unmolested. Finally, the hostiles were to deliver one chieftain and four of their leading men to be held as hostages by the Army at Fort Walla Walla.

In grief—and relief—the hostile leaders signed Wright's terms of capitulation and began to fulfil them at once. Wright said: "They know us, they have felt our power. . . ." They had. Defeated, humbled, crushed and fearful, the Couer d'Alenes in company with other tribesmen who attended the council, would never again be an obstacle to the settlement of the Northwestern country.

Colonel Wright broke camp on the 18th, took his hostages and prisoners, and struck out for the Steptoe battlefield to

reclaim the howitzers buried there; also to seek out and fight any Indians he could find.

The whirlwind vigour of Wright's campaign caught the Spokans divided. Some were afraid; others still wanted to resist. When the triumphant soldiers appeared in their country and made a bivouac, bristling and eager to fight, the Spokane leaders decided to parley with them. Colonel Wright reiterated his demand for unconditional surrender—or fight. The Indians then held a private council of their own. They ultimately concurred on capitulation. Subsequently Polotkin, Garry Spokane, and the heretofore adamantly defiant and war-like Melkapsi, signed articles of surrender. In the last two paragraphs of his report of this, Wright said: "The entire Spokane nation, chiefs, headmen, and warriors, expressed great joy that peace was restored, and promised, before the Great Spirit, to remain our true friends for evermore. They have suffered, they have *felt* us in battle, and I have faith that they will keep their word. . . .

"I cannot close this communication without expressing my thanks to Father Joset, the superior of the Couer d'Alene mission, for his zealous and unwearied exertions in bringing these Indians to an understanding of their true position. For ten days and nights the father has toiled incessantly, and only left us this morning after witnessing the fruition of all his labors."

With their allies gone, the Yakimas were left to face the wrath of George Wright alone. On the 24th of September, they came in. Chief Owhi was first. Qualchin was absent. Colonel Wright, remembering Owhi from the 1856 campaign, gave him a cold reception. With scarcely more than a nod, he put Owhi in chains, then sent one of the Indians who had come in with Owhi to seek Qualchin and tell him that, unless he came in immediately, Owhi would be hanged.

What happened next is thus recorded in the colonel's report: "Qual-chew came to me at 9 o'clock this morning, and at 9½ he was hung." Lieutenant Kip, whose *Army Life On The Pacific* was published in New York in 1859, was more revealing. "At about nine o'clock on the following morning a small party of

Indians was seen emerging from the mouth of a near-by canyon. The party consisted of two braves and a fine-looking squaw, the three riding abreast, and a small hunchback following a little way in the rear. The two braves were decked out in bright scarlet and presented a dashing air. Each carried a rifle and one, who was easily marked as the leader of the party, carried, hanging from his belt, an ornamented tomahwak and a pistol.

"The squaw whose striking comeliness was remarked by all, was richly attired; two ornamented scarfs rested over her right shoulder, the flowing ends passing under her right arm. A lance, the long staff of which was completely wound around with various colored beads and ribbon, and from the end of which depended two long tippers of beaver, rested across her saddle in front. Her features were such that by some she was thought to be a half-blood.

"Without the slightest exhibition of fear or embarrassment, the party rode directly to Colonel Wright's tent, in front of which Captain Keys, Lieutenant Lyon, and a few others were standing. The leader asked in Chinook: 'Ca mitlite mica hyas tyee?' (Where does you' chief live?). Keys stepped to the tent and holding aside the opening said: 'Colonel, we have distinguished visitors here.' Wright came out and began talking in Chinook with the Indian, who in the meantime had ridden nearer the tent, and, to his surprise, soon learned that he was none other than Qualchin.

"At the Colonel's invitation Qualchin dismounted. It was now observed that he possessed a fine physique: broad and deep of chest and muscular of limb, with small hands and feet. For a moment the two stood talking, Qualchin with his rifle standing on the ground by his side.

"While they were thus engaged, Wright, turning aside, called an orderly and gave orders to carry to the officer of the guard directing that a detachment of soldiers be sent him at once.

"During the talk, Wright mentioned Owhi in a matter to indicate that he was also present. This information startled Qualchin and in his excitement he asked excitedly, 'Cah?' (Where?). The Colonel replied 'Owhi mitlite yawa,' (Owhi is

there), pointing where he was detained. Plainly bewildered by the intelligence that his father was being held a captive, Qualchin repeated, like one partially dazed, 'Owhi mitlite yawa! Owhi mitlite yawa!' Evidently it was beginning to dawn upon him that, whatever might have been his intentions in visiting the chief of the soldiers, he had voluntarily fastened upon himself the irons of captivity. The officers standing near eyed the Indian closely, fearing that he might attempt to use some of his weapons, and were ready to spring upon and disarm him at the first suspicious move.

"The detachment of soldiers arrived, under command of Captain James A. Hardie, officer of the guard. The Colonel requested of Qualchin his arms, and, though it was expected that he would offer resistance, he promptly complied with the request. He had, for that date in the history of guns, a very fine pistol, which was found to be fully loaded and capped. He carried also an ample supply of ammunition.

"After surrendering his arms, the Colonel directed him to go with the guard, which he did very reluctantly, requiring to be pulled along by the arms.

"On witnessing this turn of affairs, the squaw, who proved to be the wife of Qualchin, the daughter of Saulotkin, in a frenzy of chagrin dexterously twirled her decorated lance over her head, and uttering a shrill cry drove it into the ground, where she left it and rode away.

"Immediately after the guard started away with the prisoner, Wright pencilled a note to Captain Hardie directing him to hang Qualchin at once. By the time the order was placed in Hardie's hands he had reached the guard-tent, and, his orders brooking no delay, made known to Qualchin, before the latter could enter the tent, that he was now to be put to death. The Indian was so completely overcome by this pronouncement of his sentence that he was unable to stand, and prostrated himself upon the ground, from which position he could not be induced or forced to rise. Bewailing his condition, he cursed Kamiakin, and thus led those who heard him to suspect that he considered Kamiakin in some way responsible for his present predicament. Being

convinced that he could not be prevailed upon to rise of his own volition, the soldiers, after a severe struggle, for he was a man of great strength and activity notwithstanding the fact that he had an unhealed wound in the lower part of his body, bound his hands and six of them raised him from the ground and carried him in their arms to a leaning tree that stood but a short distance away.

"Here the struggle was renewed. Though he was bound he countered their efforts to place the noose about his neck so skilfully that they were finally compelled to press him down upon the ground. To General (then Lieutenant) Lyon, in later years, is attributed the declaration that 'no more mournful sounds were ever heard than those made by Qualchin in begging for his life.' Over and over he repeated, 'Copet, six! Copet, six! Wake mamelusa nica! Nica potlatch hiyu chickamen, hiyu cuitan, spouse mica wake mamelusa nica! Hiya siwash sulex!' In English: 'Stop, friends! Stop, friends! Don't kill me! I will give you a lot of money and many horses, if you will not kill me! Many Indians will be angry!'

"The rope was thrown over a large limb and a number of soldiers seizing the loose end, soon finished the unpleasant duty by drawing the chief up, out of the arms of their comrades, until he swung in mid-air.

"Two miners, engaged in the quartermaster's department, who had been with a party attacked by Qualchin near the Columbia River, a few months before, assisted the soldiers in pulling the rope.

"... From the moment when Qualchin called at the tent of the commander, to the time of his hanging was no longer than fifteen minutes. . . ."

Now—a hundred years later—why did Qualchin ride into the Army's camp and ask to see Colonel Wright? He arrived before the colonel's messenger could possibly have reached him. A possible reason was that Kamiakin had sent him, a wanted man, to see what Colonel Wright's reaction would be when a notorious fugitive surrendered himself.

After Qualchin's execution, Kamiakin and his brother

Skroom fled into the Rocky Mountains and were never apprehended. Did Qualchin's hanging inspire Kamiakin's flight and subsequent hiding?

As for Owhi, he was on the way to Fort Walla Walla under the personal supervision of Lieutenant Michael Morgan. Owhi rode on Morgan's right and Morgan, being left-handed, wore his revolver on the left side. Owhi assumed Morgan was unarmed. At a ford of the Tucannon, Owhi suddenly lashed Morgan across the face, twice, with his quirt, and directed a third blow against his own horse, breaking away at great speed. Morgan recovered from the lashing and pursued Owhi, firing as he rode. Three of the pistol balls struck Owhi who ran into a blind arroyo where he was brought to bay. The Indian, badly wounded, faced Lieutenant Morgan whose pistol was empty.

When Sergeant Edward Ball rode up, Lieutenant Morgan ordered him to kill Owhi. The Indian was sitting erectly on his horse and had not spoken. Ball raised his gun and fired. Owhi fell sideways off his horse. Ball's shot had pierced Owhi's head. He lay in the dirt and dust until sundown, when he died.

The Nez Percés hovered until Owhi's spirit had departed, then plundered the body of everything of value. Lieutenant Morgan took Owhi's tack-studded saddle. He gave it eventually to Surgeon Barnes at Vancouver. (Doctor Barnes was the man who attended Abraham Lincoln the night Lincoln was assassinated.)

By one route or another the troublemakers were departing. Down south, the Rogue's tough old chieftain, John, was taken into custody and sentenced to Alcatraz prison in San Francisco Bay along with his son and others. *En route* by sea, John and his son attempted to escape by leaping overboard. There was a terrific battle. When it was over, Chief John was back in irons, his son had been shot in the leg, seriously enough to warrant amputation. Many years later, old John was returned to his people.

Some war-leaders were killed, others were imprisoned, and a few, like Owhi, were assassinated. The tribes north and south

were crushed and their spirits humbled. *'They have felt our power ...'* •

There were still some hostile Palouses and Walla Walla. There also remained the unsolved murder of Agent Bolon. No one had forgotten either fact, least of all Colonel George Wright.

On the 25th of September, 1858, Major Greier of Wright's command returned from the Steptoe battlefield. He had, among other things, the remains of Captain Taylor and Lieutenant Gaston. On this day, also, Colonel Wright apprehended fifteen warriors and hanged six of them as participants in both the Whitman and Bolon affairs.

On the 26th, Wright heard a rumour of some Palouse fugitives in the vicinity. He struck out after them, found plenty of abandoned villages, many Indian signs, but no Indians. It rained and the wind blew. On the 28th, Wright's march was westerly of Spectre Lake and it rained a dismal drizzle all afternoon. The evening camp was made beside Ouraytayouse Creek not far from its confluence with the Palouse River, which was followed on the 29th, for fifteen miles, when another bivouac was made. To this, unexpectedly, came several unarmed Indians. They were received coolly, but not molested. Colonel Wright exhibited to them his surviving prisoners. The newcomers were then told the fate of the others. They were also told that, no matter how far a fugitive Indian fled, the Army would find and punish every hostile, but that all friendlies would be treated as allies of the United States. The Indians returned to the woods and after a time came in with their chieftain and families.

On the 30th, Wright held a council. Without preliminaries he said he wanted the murderers of two miners killed the previous April. One warrior was promptly handed over. He was hanged in plain sight of all. The Indians taken earlier were then brought out, given a brief trial and three of them were hanged. The colonel then demanded all United States property in the possession of the Palouses, and this was given over. He then demanded a chieftain and four hostages, received them, and laid down the law. He would make no treaty with the Palouses

but would wait a year and see if they behaved. If so, he would consider a treaty. Moreover, they were to allow emigrants to cross their land and, in the event that recalcitrants developed among them, they were to be apprehended and brought immediately to the authorities.

Wright said he had treated the Indians 'severely, but they justly deserved it all. They will remember.' They did, especially the hangings which were performed in plain sight of squaws, bucks and pups.

The hanged Palouses, like Owhi, died without showing fear, in contrast to war-leader Qualchin.

The Walla Wallas weren't treated with until October because the forage was too poor for Wright to continue his Autumn campaign. He went back to Fort Walla Walla and from there sent couriers to summon the last remaining hostile bands to a council. When the Indians arrived, Colonel Wright demanded that every buck among them who had taken part in the recent fighting against the army should stand up. Thirty-five warriors arose. Wright selected four of the more notorious among them, handed these over to the guard and ordered them to be hanged.

The Walla Wallas had, of course, heard of the previous hangings. They watched stoically and when the last corpse hung slack, were ready to acknowledge total defeat. With their capitulation and the closing of Colonel Wright's Fall Campaign, the Northwest Conquest was complete.

Although terrible wars were to rage northeastward and in the bleak Apache country, south and west, for decades yet to come, the Indians of the Northwest never again arose against their conquerors. There were individual depredations from time to time but these were swiftly, peremptorily, taken care of by settler-tribunals. Colonel Wright had vividly impressed upon the natives, by many examples, that, if he had to return, it would mean extinction. This they never forgot.

Lawbreakers were apprehended by their own tribesmen and delivered to the authorities. The Rogues, Yakimas, Walla Wallas, Spokans, Pend D'Orielles, Klamaths, Umatillas, Klickitats, Umpquas, Palouses, Couer d'Alenes, tribes, sub-

tribes, became reconciled as best they could to the white man's road. When the Civil War broke out with its attendant withdrawal of troops, the tribesmen did not rebel as others did throughout the west. They had submitted to the only soldier whom they ever fought, who fought Indians in a way they thoroughly understood; they did not forget.

After Colonel Wright's campaign was ended, General Clarke urged the government to ratify the Indian treaties. Isaac Stevens and Joe Lane were still in the national capitol, delegates from their respective territories. Between them they succeeded in hastening the payments, considered binding in Indian eyes, to any treaty.

In late September, General (Squaw Killer) Harney arrived to replace General Clarke in the newly-formed Military Department of Oregon and Washington. One of his first acts was to revoke General Wool's exclusion order and throw open the interior to settlement. This act, even more than combat, showed Indians the futility of fighting Americans, for with each autumn more spirals of smoke arose from the valleys, the plateaux and the clearings where settlers' cabins were, and yet the Oregon country was large enough for both races.

Kamiakin was never apprehended; the Rockies were vast. Colonel Wright and his wife were drowned when the steamer *Brother Jonathon* foundered and sank near the mouth of the Columbia.

An era had passed, an empire had been carved, apportioned and tamed. The Northwest Conquest was complete.

INDEX

- Abernathy, Governor, 54, 58, 59,
 61, 62, 69, 70.
 Alcorn, Miles, 115.
 Alden, Capt., 103, 104.
 Ambrose, G. H., 93.
 Angeline, 144.
 Angell, Martin, 96, 106.
 Apache Indians, 12.
 Applegate, Jesse, 51, 59, 84.
 Assiniboine Indians, 13.
 Astor, John Jacob, 34, 36.
 Astorians, The, 19, 29, 36.
 Augur, Capt., 124, 125.

 Bailey, William, 42, 43, 50.
 Balbao, 15.
 Ball, Edward, 187.
 Bannock Indians, 12.
 Barkley, Charles, 16.
 Barnes, Dr., 187.
 Bering, Vitus, 16.
 Berry, Sgt., 61.
 Bewley, Lorinda, 58, 63.
 Bill, Chief, 93, 107.
 Blackfeet Indians, 11, 12, 26, 31,
 128, 129, 137.
 Blanchet, Fr., 31, 59.
 Bledsoe, Lt., 116.
 Blood Indians, 113.
 Bolon, A. J., 130, 131, 151, 153,
 154, 188.
 Broughton, William, 18.
 Bruce, Jim, 105.
 Buchanan, Lt.-Col., 117, 118, 120,
 123, 125.
 Bush, Gilbert, 97.

 Camaspelo, 70.
 Carson, Kit, 40.
 Casey, Silas, 91, 92, 107.
 Cayuse Indians, 11-13, 47, 50,
 56-62, 64-68, 70-71, 72, 74,
 78-81, 127-131, 146, 148, 154.
 Charbonneau, Toussaint, 20.
 Cheyenne Indians, 114.

 Chinook Indians, 12, 13, 21, 39.
 Clark, James Rogers, 20.
 Clark, John, 108.
 Clark, William, 15, 19-22, 26, 27.
 Clarke, Newman, 151-154, 169,
 172-175, 190.
 Cockstock, 49, 50.
 Colen, Joseph, 25.
 Comanche Indians, 11, 12.
 Cook, James, 16.
 Coos Bay Indians, 12, 116.
 Coquille Indians, 89-91, 101, 107,
 109, 115, 116.
 Coquilton, 145.
 Cornelius, Thomas, 137, 138.
 Cortez, Hernan', 15.
 Couer d'Alene Indians, 12, 22, 26,
 137, 158, 161, 163, 167, 169,
 178, 181-185, 189.
 Cowlitz Indians, 12.
 Craig, William, 65, 73, 146, 147.
 Cree Indians, 39.
 Crook, George, 43.
 Crooks, Ramsey, 36.
 Crow Indians, 11-13, 31.
 Cunningham, John, 111.
 Curry, Governor, 114, 117, 133.

 Dahkota Indians, 113.
 Dart, Anson, 81, 90, 98, 102.
 Dart, P. C., 81.
 Davis, Tom, 109.
 Davis, Jefferson, 139.
 Day, John, 36.
 De Chute Indians, 61, 131, 132,
 148.
 DeMoy, Victor, 166, 167.
 Dent, F. T., 168.
 Dillecy, David, 82.
 Doty, Agent, 127, 128.
 Drake, Francis, 16.
 Drew, Agent, 116.

 Edgar, 133.
 Edwards, Richard, 162.

- Ellis, 70.
 Ely, Capt., 104.
 English, Capt., 86.
 Ferrelo, 16.
 Fields, Calvin, 111.
 Fillmore, President, 83.
 Finley, Jacques, 56.
 FitzGerald, Major, 111-113.
 Five Crows, Chief, 58, 63, 65.
 Flathead Indians, 12, 25, 38, 39.
 Floyd, John, 151.
 Foster, Charles, 116.
 Frazell, Thomas, 106.
 Fremont, John Charles, 19.
 Fuca, Juan de, 16.

 Gailand, Gen., 154.
 Gaines, John P., 81, 82, 85, 86.
 Garnett, Major, 153.
 Garry, Chief, 137, 138, 175, 179-182.
 Gaston, Lt., 161-164, 170, 171.
 Gay, George, 42, 43, 50.
 Geiger, R. C., 108, 109.
 George, Chief, 106, 107, 122.
 Gervais, Joseph, 65.
 Gibbs, George, 155.
 Gilliam, Cornelius, 61-69, 72.
 Goodall, Jim, 103.
 Goodman, Calvin, 92.
 Goshute Indians, 12.
 Gracie, Archibald, 127.
 Graham, Trader, 174.
 Gray-Eagle, 63.
 Gray, Richard, 16-19.
 Gray, William, 56.
 Greer, George, 55.
 Gregg, Lt., 162-167, 171.
 Greier, Major, 178, 188.

 Haller, Granville, 131-135.
 Harmon, Daniel, 32.
 Hardie, James, 185.
 Harney, Gen., 190.
 Harris, George W., 111.
 Harvey, Gen., 135.
 Hembre, Capt., 139.
 Henry, Andrew, 39.
 Hidatsa Indians, 20, 113.
 Hitchcock, E. A., 91.
 Howse, Joseph, 25.

 Hulem, Hiram, 108.

 Ice, 130, 131.
 Iriquois Indians, 26, 27, 39.

 Jefferson, Thomas, 19, 22.
 Jewett, John R., 33.
 Jim, Chief, 106.
 Joe, Chief, 94, 105, 106.
 John, Chief, 92, 93, 122-126, 187.
 Jones, J. K., 111.
 Jones, Mrs., 111.
 Joseph, Chief, 65.
 Joset, Fr. S. J., 13, 157, 161, 174, 175, 181, 183.
 Judah, Capt., 108.

 Kalapoor Indians, 12.
 Kalispell Indians, 12, 39.
 Kamiakin, 52, 128-134, 137-140, 142-150, 179, 182, 185-187, 190.
 Kasiskell, 34.
 Kautz, Lt., 90, 91, 103, 106.
 Kearney, Major, 83-85, 90.
 Kelley, James, 135-139.
 Kelsey, Henry, 18, 19.
 Kenne, Grenville, 111.
 Keys, Capt., 176, 184.
 Kiowa Indians, 12.
 Kip, Lawrence, 127, 176, 183.
 Kirkham, Capt., 154.
 Klamath Indians, 10, 12, 40, 51, 82, 86, 189.
 Klickitat Indians, 11, 12, 140, 155, 189.
 Klokama Indians, 76.
 Koolenais Indians, 39.
 Kwaliouqua Indians, 12.

 Lamerick, Capt., 94, 96, 97, 103, 118.
 Lane, Joc, 49, 74, 76, 81, 84, 85, 98, 104-107, 190.
 Lansdale, R. H., 153, 154.
 La Verendrye Brothers, 19.
 Lawyer, Chief, 128-130, 147, 168.
 Ledyard, John, 16.
 Lee, Henry A. G., 58-62, 64, 69-74.
 Lee, Jason, 46.

- Leshi, 145.
 Lewis, Joe, 56, 66, 67, 77.
 Lewis, Meriwether, 15, 19-22, 27.
 Limpy, Chief, 106, 107, 122.
 Looking Glass, 129, 148.
 Louisiana Purchase, 7-9.
 Loring, Col., 75, 78-80.
 Luelling, Henderson, 80.
 Lupton, Major, 111.
 Lyon, Capt., 184, 186.
- Mackay, Alexander, 34-37.
 Mackenzie, Alexander, 19, 23, 24.
 Mackell, W. A., 172.
 McDermit, Charles, 99.
 McDonald, Archibald, 40.
 McDonald, Finan, 26, 27.
 McKay, Thomas, 40, 41, 62, 63, 69, 135.
 McLoughlin, John, 36-38, 41, 42.
 McTavish, Simon, 24.
 Mandon Indians, 12, 20, 37.
 Maquina, 32, 33, 35.
 Mars, Lily, 77.
 Martin, Lt.-Col., 115.
 Mason, Governor, 59, 131, 133.
 Maxon, Capt., 70.
 Mayden, Wesley, 108.
 Meek, Joe, 46, 77.
 Meeway, 70.
 Meichal, 131.
 Melkapsi, 175, 183.
 Metcalfe, Bob, 105, 106, 115.
 Miller, John, 103, 107.
 Modoc Indians, 12, 51, 82, 86, 99, 101, 107.
 Mojave Indians, 41.
 Morgan, Michael, 176, 187.
 Moses, Chief, 144.
 Mullan, Lt., 180, 181.
- Nesmith, J. W., 103, 106, 137, 151, 154.
 Newell, Robert, 59, 62, 72.
 Nez Percé Indians, 10, 12, 21, 31, 47, 50, 57, 59, 65-67, 70, 72, 76, 81, 82, 127-130, 138, 146-149, 154-158, 160, 161, 165, 167-169, 173, 176, 180, 187.
 Nipissing Indians, 26, 39.
- Nisquali Indians, 12.
 Noland, Rhodes, 102.
- Ogden, Peter Skene, 39, 40.
 Ogle, Lt., 108.
 Oldfield, Jack, 107, 108.
 Old, Joseph, 52.
 Olney, Nathan, 131, 135.
 Otter-Skin-Shirt, 70.
 Owens, Capt., 106.
 Owhi, Chief, 130, 144, 145, 148, 183-187, 189.
- Paget, C. C., 153.
 Palmer, Joel, 59, 61, 62, 66, 102, 106, 110-112, 122, 125-130.
 Palouse Indians, 39, 60, 67-69, 129, 144, 146, 155-158, 169, 178, 188, 189.
 Padosy, Fr., 134.
 Parker, Samuel, 47.
 Parrish, J. L., 90.
 Patkanin, 145.
 Paviosto Indians, 12.
 Pend D'Orielle Indians, 12, 13, 26, 178, 189.
 Peupeumoxmox, Chief, 65, 70, 71, 129, 135-137.
 Phillip, Chief, 93, 94.
 Pickett, George E., 145.
 Piegan Indians, 26, 113.
 Piute Indians, 12, 154.
 Poland, John, 116.
 Polk, James K., 8.
 Polotkin, Chief, 180-182.
- Qualchin, 130-133, 148, 183-189.
 Quiamashouskin, 76-78.
- Radford, Lt., 107.
 Rains, Major, 133-135.
 "Ramsay, Jack", 15.
 Randolph, Surgeon, 165, 167, 171.
 Raphael, Jacques, 27.
 Ravallo, Fr., 148.
 Rhodes, Jacob, 103.
 Richard, Chief, 70.
 Rogue River Indians, 12, 81, 85, 86, 90, 92-95, 98, 101, 105, 107, 109, 115, 116, 189.

- Rose, Dr. William, 103.
 Ross, Alexander, 38, 39.
 Ross, John, 101† 106, 113, 114.
 Rush, Gilbert, 90.

 Sacajawea, 20.
 Salter, John, 32, 33.
 Sam, Chief, 93-98, 101, 105, 106.
 Sanpoil Indians, 27.
 Santa Anna, Generalissimo, 8.
 Saulotkin, 174, 175, 185.
 Scarface, Chief, 92-94, 97, 98.
 Scott, Levi, 84.
 Scott, Winfield, 172.
 Seattle, Chief, 144, 145.
 Shahapatian Indians, 27.
 Shasta Indians, 10, 82, 86, 92, 93, 98, 102, 107.
 Shaw, Capt., 69, 149.
 Shelton, Isaac, 111.
 Sheridan, Phil., 134, 142, 143.
 Shoshoni Indians, 10, 12, 20, 21, 137, 154.
 Sinclair, Jim, 141.
 Sioux Indians, 11-13, 31, 114, 135.
 Siwash Indians, 12, 13.
 Skinner, Alonzo, 94-98, 102, 106.
 Skroom, 148, 187.
 Slaughter, Lt., 131, 133.
 Smith, Capt. A. J., 108-110, 114, 117, 122, 125.
 Smith, Jedediah S., 19, 40-42.
 Smith, Persifar E., 79, 106.
 Snake Indians, 38, 39, 81, 82, 98, 146, 154.
 Soultean Indians, 39.
 Spalding, Henry H., 46, 47, 56, 57, 60.
 Spokane Indians, 12, 26, 39, 130, 137, 147, 148, 155, 158, 169, 170, 182, 183, 189.
 Spotted Eagle, 148.
 Stanton, Lt., 92.
 Steptoe, Edward Jenner, 142, 143, 148-150, 155-177, 181, 182.
 Steele, Elisha, 93-97, 106.
 Stevens, Isaac, 129-139, 146-151, 190.
 Stickas, Chief, 64, 66, 67, 70.
 Stokanchan, 131.
 Stuart, Robert, 34, 36, 83, 84.
 Sullix, 98.

 Takelman Indians, 12.
 Tamahas, 76, 77.
 Tamsucky, Chief, 56, 57, 66, 67.
 Taylor, Capt., 61, 101, 156, 163-165, 169, 170, 174, 178, 188.
 Teias, 133.
 Thompson, Charlotte Small, 25, 28.
 Thompson, David, 24-28, 40.
 Thorn, Jonathon, 34, 35, 39.
 Tierney, T. T., 103.
 Tillamook Indians, 12.
 Tilaukit, Chief, 52, 67, 72, 73, 75-78, 81, 129.
 Timothy, Chief, 158, 160, 168, 169.
 Tipso, Chief, 98.
 Tolman, J. C., 99.
 Tolo, Chief, 93, 94.
 Tonkawa Indians, 13.
 Towatowe, 66, 67, 70.
 Trimble, Major, 158.
 Tsiachalkis, 76.
 Tucker, Major, 80.
 Tunahé Indians, 12.
 Turner, John, 41, 42.
 Tutumi Indians, 12.
 T'Vault, G. W., 84, 89, 90.
 Twana Indians, 12.

 Ulloa, 15.
 Umatilla Indians, 12, 148, 189.
 Umpqua Indians, 12, 189.
 Ute Indians, 12, 154.

 VanCleave, J. S., 153.
 Vancouver, George, 18.
 Victor, Chief, 163.
 Vincent, Chief, 161, 162.

 Waillaipu Incident—See Whitman.
 Walla-Walla Indians, 12, 21, 27, 59, 65, 70, 188, 189, 127-131, 154.
 Wappiwapichleh, 131.
 Warner, Sam, 111.
 Wasco Indians, 12.
 Waters, James, 65, 69-72, 73.
 Wenatchee Indians, 12.
 White, Dr. Elijah, 47, 49.

- Whitman, Marcus, 46, 47, 50,
55-62, 66, 70-72, 75-78, 188.
Whitman, Narcissa, 46, 55, 57-59.
Williams, Will, 166, 167.
Williamson, Lt., 112.
Wills, Jim, 102.
Wilson, Capt., 136.
Winder, Capt., 163, 166.
Wishram Indians, 12.
Woodman, Calvin, 93.
Wool, John Ellis, 117, 134, 135,
139, 140, 145, 150-152, 190.
Wright, Ben, (Agent), 116.
Wright Ben 12 28 22 101
Wright, Col., 140-148, 150, 173-
190.
Wyetu, 19. •
Yakima Indians, 11, 13, 21,
129-135, 139, 140, 143-148,
153.
Yellepit, Chief, 27, 169, 182, 183,
189.
Yellow Serpent, 76.
York (Negro slave), 21.
Young, Brigham, 155.
Young Fwing 40-42

